CONTENTS

VOL. XLVIII AUTUMN 1959 No. 191

ARTICLES *Page*

RECENT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN EUROPE
(1) *Walter Hallstein* 249
(2) *Alfred Robens* 257
(3) *Maurice Faure* 260
(4) *J. Flint Cahan* 266
THE CHINESE STEEL CAMPAIGN. *Edward J. Brennan* 273
THE MEANING DOESN'T MATTER? *Cyril Barrett* 291
THE ART OF BIOGRAPHY. *Mary Purcell* 305
SUDANI-EGYPTIAN RELATIONS. *J. J. W. Murphy* 318
GERARD MURPHY: 1901-1959. *Colm O Lochlainn* 332
A NOTE ON J. D. SALINGER. *Augustine Martin* 336

BOOKS REVIEWED

Portraits of Russian Personalities between Reform and Revolution. By Richard Hare (Joseph F. Reynolds), 345; Safe Conduct: an Early Autobiography and other works. By Boris Pasternack (Joseph F. Reynolds), 345; The Achievement of T. S. Eliot. By F. O. Matthiessen (Basil Payne), 354; The Business of Criticism. By Helen Gardner (Basil Payne), 354; J. M. Synge, 1871-1909. By David H. Green and Edward M. Stephens (Monk Gibbon), 358; Moral Values in the Ancient World. By John Ferguson (P. G. Walsh), 360; From the Gracchi to Nero. By H. H. Scullard (D. M. Nicol), 363; Greeks. By Michael Grant and Don Pottinger (D. M. Nicol), 364; The Generalship of Alexander the Great (D. M. Nicol), 365; Le Droit Ecclésiastique Contemporain d'Irlande. By Jean Blanchard (P. C. Barry), 366; The Life of St Thomas Aquinas—Biographical Documents. By Kenelin Foster, O.P. (M. B. Crowe), 367; The Life of St John of the Cross. By Crisógono de Jesús (Elizabeth P. Crowe), 370; St Paul. By Claude Tresmontant; St Augustine. By Henri Marron; Master Eckhardt. By Jeanne Angelet-Hustagne; Buddha and Buddhism. By Maurice Percheron; Saints and Ourselves. Third Series. Edited by Philip Caraman (Cyril Barrett), 371; St Methoduis. The Symposium. Translated by Herbert Musurillo; St Odo of Cluny. Translated by Gerard Sitwell (Aubrey Gwynn), 373; Living Languages in Catholic Worship: An Historical Enquiry. By Cyril Korolevsky (P. C. Barry), 373; Anglican Liturgies of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries. By W. Jardine Grisbrooke (P. C. Barry), 375.

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Recent Economic Development in Europe

WALTER HALLSTEIN ALFRED ROBENS

MAURICE FAURE J. FLINT CAHAN

(1) *by* WALTER HALLSTEIN

AS a man active in the European Community, I should like at the outset to describe the characteristics of this Community and to explain why it is, in our opinion, a driving force in developing freedom of trade. Popularly known in English as the Common Market, it consists of six countries : France, Belgium, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Italy and Germany. In our view this European Economic Community is not merely an important commercial and economic development on the international plane, but is also an effort of the mind which deserves attention.

Three points of importance are to be noted. First, there is the fact that the Common Market is an entity with a life of its own, and is not merely a link between individual national economies. Secondly, there is a realization that the Community is dynamic, that is to say, it will make great changes in existing circumstances. Thirdly, the trend of these changes will be liberal.

As to the first point, the separate existence of the Community, I should begin by pointing out that the reasons for establishing the Common Market are largely political. We are seeking to develop a new strength, a new political factor in the free world, which will, by its very existence, strengthen the camp of freedom. We want to make our contribution to the cause of the free world in the great struggle which is dividing East from West. For our part, we intend to take up a position of our own choice, not merely to stand somewhere between the camps. No responsible person in our Community has ever toyed with the idea of our being a ' third force '. Our idea is to strengthen the defence of liberty. We can best help here through the new strength

In these pages we are privileged to publish the substance of a Conference held in Dublin on 20 July 1959 under the auspices of the Irish Council of the European Movement. Editor

we produce in Europe and by at last creating genuine peace for all time between European States in the Community of the Six.

Then we shall be able—what we are not able as small national entities—to play our appropriate part among such large political and economic units as the United States or Great Britain and the British Commonwealth, in the peaceful ordering of the life of the nations. For we know that, today, answers to the most burning problems, such as war or peace, Communism, atomic power, poverty, underdeveloped areas, can be found only on a world level.

In addition to these general reasons, there are, however, special reasons for considering that our task is fundamentally a political one. These stem from the structure of the European Economic Community itself. The core of our Economic Community is a Customs Union ; and this has blinded many people to the fact that this technical aspect of the Union is not the be-all and end-all of the Community. Indeed, it is but one of the many facets to the structure we are creating. We have a great many more ambitious plans as well, and our Treaty brings us face to face with far greater tasks. In the last half century, States have come to exert very great influence on the data of economic life. So it has come about that entirely different and separate economic systems have grown up in the various countries of the Community.

How can we deal with this situation ? At a moment when we try to bring about a merger of national economies, one theoretical solution would be to do away with all State intervention ; but it is just not possible to re-create the situation that existed in 1913—if only because we, today, have a much more lively social conscience. So when we do away with the duties and the quotas, the artificial barriers to trade, there still remain in the economic armoury of the States means by which they can cancel any advantage that has been created by the abolition of these trade barriers. The clumsiest of these means are, perhaps, subsidies or, for instance, the control of transport by the State. These make it possible to re-establish the artificial barrier in another form. Many other measures are at the disposal of Governments and the effects of such measures would be felt in the other Community countries much more intensely than had previously been the case in the several economies, because after the abolition of customs and quotas there would be fewer means available to counter arbitrary action by any one country. So, to the negative action of breaking down barriers, we must add the positive element of creating a Community action, a common action. National economic policy will, in certain cases, have to give way to a community discipline.

We must also remember that the competition which we wish to establish as the fundamental principle of our internal and external trade cannot function freely in all branches of the economy. I am

thinking, for instance, of agriculture and of transport. Community policy in these branches can, therefore, mean nothing but common policy.

For these reasons, the Community possesses a very subtly graded system of common or harmonized policies which will apply more and more fully as the transitional period progresses.

Under the Treaty, certain sectors of economic policy can be declared to be a field of 'joint interest' and this means that the State or States concerned must give due weight to this joint interest in determining what is, legally speaking, still a sovereign decision of that national Government. In other cases, such, for instance, as social policy, 'collaboration' between member States is required. There are yet others in which policy is to be concerted.

The next higher degree of Community policy is 'co-ordination' of policies—for instance, in the field of general economic policy, according to our Treaty.

Finally, the most advanced form of collaboration is found in the Community solution which replaces individual national policies by a strictly common policy, as, for instance, in external commerce, agriculture, and transport. These are fields of common policy instead of separate national policies of the single Member States. Now, it is only a step from this to the need for the creation of common institutions. They may appear to the outsider to be clumsy but if we are to go beyond the stage of merely preventing certain restraints on trading within the Community, we must transfer to a community discipline certain activities that have hitherto been the prerogative of individual States. The models for these institutions are to be found in the experience of the Federal Constitutions of the world.

Today, then, the European Economic Community is an, as yet, not entirely completed organization. It has all the features of a Federation, with a Community Executive (represented by the Commission, which is entirely independent of the Governments of the Member States, for we are not allowed to take any instructions from the Governments) ; with its European Parliament, with the Council of Ministers, the Federal organ in which the Member States make known their views, and finally with that High Court which is essential for any community based on the rule of law, a sort of Supreme Court of our Community.

Let me give an example, in order to illustrate this. Nothing is, perhaps, more characteristic of our activity than the arrangement of seats in the European Parliament where the Delegates sit, not by nationality but grouped according to political criteria : Socialists, Christian Democrats, Liberals and affiliated groups.

The second point in the European Economic Community is the fact that it is not conservative. It is not freezing any accidental balance of interests ; it is dynamic, it is progressive, evolutionary.

This is true, first, of the internal effects it exercises in the Community itself. The whole process of the European integration is and was and will always be gradual. We began, as you will remember, with the Coal and Steel Community which, as we fully realized, was only one step on the road towards the unification of Europe. I am not giving away any secret today in saying that when we set up this Coal and Steel Community we had already in mind that certain defects—due to the fact that it was confined to heavy industry—would soon show themselves and that, after a while, there would be no other means of curing them than by going further along the path of integration, that is to say, extending the scope of the Community to other industries and to Capital and to Labour as well.

The same dynamism is animating the fundamental economic policy concepts of the European Economic Community. What is this Community's ' philosophy ', if I may be permitted to use an Americanism ? On what theory is it based ? Well, in the first place, it aims to free private initiative. I say this not least because I am thinking of certain critics who, from the mere existence of institutions charged with economic functions, jump to the conclusion that a sort of European *dirigisme* is likely to ensue. This is certainly a mistaken view. Common institutions, such as the Commission of the European Economic Community, do not mean any additional restriction of the liberty of the citizen and especially not of the business community. For what is transferred from the national to the community level and is thereby withdrawn from the armoury of national economic policy, is not being taken away from individuals engaged in economic activities, but from those Government offices which have so far exerted authority in this field. Even so, these offices are not really fully divested of their authority, since in a way they become participants in new and wider functions, *via* their partnership in the community rights and functions.

The second characteristic of the philosophy of what we have done is the need, recognized by us all, for the expansion of the economy of Europe through competition. We aim at rendering the national frontiers economically irrelevant by depriving them of their economically noxious significance. In this way, we can introduce a sound division of labour beyond the national boundaries and ensure the consequences which a reasonable and sound division of labour has at all times been known to have. This means that advantages of location will make themselves felt and the productivity of human labour can be increased with the result that the living standard of all concerned will rise.

But is the freedom which is being created here to be restricted to the Economic community? Is all we are doing just the transfer of national egoisms to a new community egoism? Is it all inward-looking? My answer, and this brings me to the third characteristic of the European Economic Community, is decidedly: 'No!; our aim is freedom of trade for the European Economic Community, both internally and externally. We are outward-looking.

This, in fact, is required by the Treaty itself; and the Treaty also provides for the possibility of other European countries joining the Community should they wish to do so. Now, one must certainly be realistic and recognize that such a possibility is open without risk to countries outside the Community only if a certain equilibrium exists between their economic structure and that of the Member States of our Community. We ourselves were surprised when last year we analysed in a Report to our European Parliament on the initial situation in the Community, the extent to which conditions of economic life in the six different national economies are similar. Within the Common Market there are no differences of importance in the productivity or the technical level attained by industry, or in the break-down according to branches.

But we should not forget that for those who desire a different type of relationship with the Economic Community, provision has been made for a form of co-operation which has come to be known as association. Unlike full membership, which requires the acceptance of all rights and duties of a Member, association is a sort of relative membership. This gives the State concerned the possibility, according to its situation and requirements, of assuming only a part of the commitments and also of assuming only a part of the rights of full membership. But it is, nevertheless, a real form of membership—more than just a bilateral link, more than a mere *do ut des*. This possibility may be applied either individually or collectively; and, for instance, the attempt to set up a European economic association within the framework of O.E.E.C. was designed to further the realization of such a programme of collective association.

At this point you will perhaps expect me to tell you something about the new undertaking of the so-called 'Outer Seven' (or should I say, Eight?). I hope you will not be disappointed when I say that it seems to me to be premature to enter into this matter here, for it just happens that today the Ministers of the Seven are meeting in order to come to decisions. The only thing I can publicly state at this very moment is that we have no reason to believe that the rules which govern such an enterprise, that is to say, the rules of GATT, will not be fully respected; that we note with satisfaction what has repeatedly been said, namely, that it is by no means the intention of the promoters of the new creation to build some sort of war machine against the Community of the Six;

and finally, that we hope that from now on, nobody will reproach us any more for having built a 'Little Europe', or that we have split Europe instead of helping it to unite.

For the rest, we are looking forward with special interest to getting more information on what the announcement means that the new formation will help to build a bridge with our Community and on the other question how the problem of the non-Seven will be solved.

You know that our Community has, meanwhile, not been idle in seeking ways and means for an association of all O.E.E.C. countries. There have been two aspects of the problem—a short term and a long term aspect. These two aspects have been guiding the action of our Community, and especially the action of my Commission in this matter.

In the short run, the question has been to find a transitional solution which will avoid any vacuum, to decide what in practice can be done within the framework of O.E.E.C. and of GATT, in the endeavour to bring the quota and customs systems of the Treaty of Rome and of the eleven remaining members of O.E.E.C. into a certain harmony. Such an approach appeared to be the most realistic at that stage and to improve the chance of long-term agreement in the future.

I believe that I can already say that the measures applied to the other trade partners, especially those who are members of the O.E.E.C. by the six countries, as an interim solution, have proved successful. Statistics show that in recent months the increase of imports into the Six countries from the other O.E.E.C. countries has been considerably larger than the rise in imports of other O.E.E.C. countries from the territory of the Community.

As regards the search for a more permanent solution, a special committee of our Community, working under the chairmanship of my Commission, has for a long time been engaged in bringing the various standpoints closer together, and I can say that they have been doing this with a great measure of success.

In the development of Europe, the problem is to activate forces still dormant in this or that part of our Continent, in the widest sense. In saying this, I should like to disassociate myself from an argument which, to my mind, is completely false, that is, that in the present state of techniques a country like Ireland must be regarded as only on the edge of the main stream. The aim which we all have before us is to raise the standard of living of all sections of the population in all European countries. But the question of an institutional link-up of other countries with the Community is only one major method by which freedom of trade may be expanded. There remains a second possibility, and this is contained in the Community's commercial policy. This commercial policy will be a common policy of the Community. This is a matter of course—for we must remember that our Community,

being a Customs Union, has a common, uniform external tariff. Such a common external tariff cannot but be the subject of common administration. An institutional and political concentration of considerable extent is, therefore, taking place.

There now arises the question what use the Community will make of this facility to shape its own commercial policy. I am convinced that it will have to tend towards increasing liberalization of trade, and I have three reasons for believing this.

My first reason is legal and institutional in character. I do not know of a Constitution of any State or any Charter of any community of States which imposes upon its members a liberal commercial policy such as our Treaty does with such canonical clarity. These Treaty provisions bind the institutions, especially those not subject to instructions from national Governments—those for which, as for my Commission, the terms of reference are exclusively defined in the Treaty.

The second reason is one of psychology. It is unthinkable that the training of an economy to free trade within a community should stop short at its frontiers and should have had no effect on people's views as to what is the right or wrong way to treat commercially the rest of the world. Once an industry has decided to enter unprotected—that is, without customs duties or quantitative restrictions—into competition with the industries of five countries, its resolution to be competitive is the decisive point. That resolution then colours the attitude of our industries vis-à-vis the whole of the world.

Thirdly—and this is the most important—the interest of our Community will not allow of any but a free trade policy. We are already the largest transforming and processing area in the world, and differ from the other great economic areas or units in that we do not have at our disposal resources of raw materials comparable to those of the United States or the Soviet Union. Therefore, we must import in order to be able to process, and we must export in order to pay for our imports. As a result, the countries of the European Economic Community are already the largest importers of raw materials in the world—a fact, which, incidentally, places before us very great and very onerous tasks in connection with the problem of countries in course of development. We know that the stabilization of the prices of raw materials is an urgent necessity.

But let me return to our dependence on external trade. I cannot imagine that an area so clearly dependent on imports and exports could pursue any but a liberal external trade policy.

And so it is that we see more clearly each day even some protectionist parts of our Community turning towards the idea of free trade. Better knowledge of its own economic strength, together with the need for worldwide encouragement of trade, has resulted in the European

Economic Community, as a whole, becoming much more liberal-minded than it was at its inception, more so than the individual business communities in our single States had previously been. The amalgamation of individual and separated commercial policies will certainly serve to speed up and intensify this process. Moreover, experience has taught us that we may well have to work out a community commercial policy more speedily than is laid down in the Treaty provisions. We have already developed a procedure which assures, even today, quite some degree of co-ordination of the external trade policy of our Six countries.

I think all this will show how much we are striving to contribute to the freedom of trade. However, we want to do still more, we want to set a good example to other States in this respect ; and I am certain that next year's GATT discussions on the so-called Dillon proposals—that is, on a world-wide reduction of duties—will give us an opportunity to do so.

Let me conclude. I have tried to demonstrate two things—the irrevocability and the compelling logic behind the integration of continental Europe. We can already scarcely envisage the wheel of Western European history being turned back, and in a short while it will be quite impossible to imagine any such thing. Quite apart from all other successes, we have already established a firm and durable foundation for genuine and lasting peace between the Six countries of Western Europe. We will not let ourselves be deprived of this basis for ever closer co-operation in the future. The practice of looking upon the countries of the European Economic Community and their policy with the eyes of the nineteenth century is both mistaken and dangerous. Our activities are, we believe, commensurate with the requirements of twentieth century politics. We live in the age of large areas, to quote the famous words of President de Gaulle. Of course, this cannot happen without continuous efforts at compromise and give and take. The spirit in which we have set about our work of unification, however, guarantees the future continuity and steadfastness of the forces of unity and we are perfectly aware that the responsibilities on our shoulders go far beyond the boundaries of the selfish interests of our Six countries alone.

This, then, is the road along which we shall go forward and which we have chosen for the good, not only of our own people, but of all nations of Europe and of the free world.

(2) *by* ALFRED ROBENS

WE are all concerned about how the Common Market, how a European Free Trade Area, or how a 'Little Seven' is going to affect us. We in the United Kingdom were prevented from joining as full members of the Common Market countries, by reason of the very special position which we have as the centre of a great Commonwealth and with very large numbers of dependent territories still colonies of the United Kingdom.

The great difficulty was that we had established special trading relations with the Commonwealth countries—in which Ireland shares on the same basis as a Commonwealth country. It was because of these special Commonwealth preference arrangements that it was economically impossible for us to become a full member of the Common Market—quite apart from the political implications of a supranational authority.

But we did, however, conceive it to be our duty—and perhaps I ought to say right away that there is no difference between the Government and the Labour Party on this issue—to put forward the conception of a European Free Trade Area. Now, what did this mean? It meant a trading area which could contain within itself those European countries outside the Common Market countries as well as the Common Market countries themselves. Within the whole of this area common arrangements would be concerted for the liberalization of trade (in other words, barriers to trade, either in the form of tariffs or quotas would disappear as the years went by) but those member countries outside the Common Market would, however, be able to maintain their different tariffs on goods imported from States outside the Free Trade Area.

Negotiations took place within the framework of the O.E.E.C. under the chairmanship of Mr Reginald Maudling, the British Paymaster General, but these negotiations eventually failed. I want to make only one comment about that failure, because I think it so important that we should understand why the negotiations came to an end. Let me say, first of all, that they did not come to an end because of any technical difficulties that could not be overcome as between the Common Market countries and the rest. The question of Certificates of Origin, which is a thorny problem, as well as other technical difficulties could have been met, and in fact were being met at the time the negotiations broke down. Similarly, the problem of the Commonwealth countries had not arisen as a serious issue ; in fact it again is a problem that technically could have been met.

But the whole concept of a European Free Trade Area depended wholly and entirely upon the premise that everyone of the Six countries of the Common Market wanted a Free Trade Area ; and if any one of those countries did not want a Free Trade Area, then obviously the

negotiations could not proceed. That, of course, is what happened. I do not, at this stage, query the reasons for the French decision to veto the European Free Trade Area. That is certainly not our business. But there did come a point when the French representatives indicated that they did not want to go on with the consideration of a Free Trade Area. And so the negotiations did not break down ; they were not broken off ; they *ceased* because the fundamental essential of a Free Trade Area, namely, the unanimous agreement of all associated with the idea, had broken down, because of the new attitude of the French. Neither I nor any of my colleagues feel at all sore about the French decision. Each country is entitled to take the view it wants, within its own reasoning and its own lights. I have no doubt at all that the French had perfectly good reasons for reaching a stage when they felt that they could not go on with this concept of a Free Trade Area.

But then we had to think : ' What do we do next ? '. First, should anything be done ? Should we leave it alone ? Should we just call the whole thing off ? Or should we go on striving for this concept of a united Europe, the Six plus the others ? We came to the conclusion that it was worth while trying to go on—trying ultimately to unite the Six with the others. And so the idea which has now become known as the Stockholm Conference emerged.

This proposal envisages an association of the other countries—an association which would not be exclusive to the Seven who are in it or are likely to be in it just now, or to the Eight, if Finland joins, or to the Nine if some other country joins, or to the Ten or to the Eleven. It would not be exclusive, but would simply mean that there would be another grouping on a purely economic basis, with no question of the rather wider political implications which Professor Hallstein has so graphically and carefully described. It would be an economic association in which we would begin to tear down barriers between us, reducing our tariffs in exactly the same way and at the same rate as tariffs and quotas are reduced among the Six.

Our conception is, therefore, that while the Six as a community gradually liberalize their trade, we on our part should be pulling down our tariffs on a par with what the Six are doing.

Now, Professor Hallstein has said that he would be glad if somebody would explain what was meant by the ' bridge ' between the two groups. I hope that I may be able to throw some light on this. One of the troubles about negotiation is that if you have six or seven voices on one side, and one voice on the other, getting anywhere is made much more difficult than if you have one voice on one side of the table and one voice on the other.

Therefore, the bridge that we see in this field is that if there is established a Community of the Seven, an Economic Community, if

they have between themselves liberalized their trade, and if as a group they have kept in line and in step with the Common Market countries—then it seems to us easier for this group to negotiate with the other, than for one group to negotiate with seven other separate countries. In other words, the 'Little Seven' would not only have an economic policy but they could agree among themselves in relation to the kind of association which they consider would be acceptable to the Common Market countries and to themselves. And so when we talk about trying to make a bridge, we mean trying to take the other countries in Europe along the same path economically as the Common Market countries, and, at the appropriate stage, bringing these two groups together with a view to achieving an association between them.

I am quite sure however that uppermost in everybody's mind here, in view of the fact that Ireland is not a member of the Common Market and so far is not associated with the Seven, must be the question which I asked at the very beginning : Where do we come in ? What is going to happen to us ? What advantages will we get ? What are the disadvantages which we must face ? Now, in the first place if we look at the traditional market for Ireland, we look to the United Kingdom and, indeed, as a single country, this is the greatest single country customer in the world, both for raw materials and for foodstuffs.

You have that customer on your doorstep, within fairly easy distance. All of us would be making a big mistake if we did not face the fact that today it is the greatest market for Irish goods—four-fifths of the whole of your exports go there, and it is unlikely in the future that it could be replaced elsewhere in Europe.

Therefore, it seems to me that the bigger the global purchases of the United Kingdom, the more prosperous the United Kingdom is, the more foodstuffs it needs to buy—the greater the opportunity for increasing the size and the amount of your exports to the United Kingdom.

Now, we believe that the formation of the 'Little Seven' and we hope ultimately its association with the Common Market—will in fact do as all the advocates of the Free Trade Area have said it would do—will expand the European and the world economy. In that expanding world economy and European economy, the more prosperous the United Kingdom becomes, as a result of these developments, the bigger the market that would be available as your traditional market here in Ireland.

The disadvantage lies in the fact that you lose your preference ; at present there is no tariff of any kind upon the foodstuffs like bacon, canned cream, pig meat, eggs and dairy products, that come from Ireland to the United Kingdom. If other nations in the Seven have the tariffs which are at present against them removed, then to that extent your preference goes.

As an example, let us take the recent Danish Agreement, which takes away the ten per cent tariff against bacon and things of that kind. Now, if the Danes were to use that ten per cent in order to flood the British market, then it would indeed be harmful to any other country which supplies the United Kingdom. But it is my view that the Danes will not do that at all. Instead I believe they are likely to use the tariff concession to increase their net return rather than to increase their sales. For to flood a market by reducing prices, to increase an export for the same amount of money, is not half as good business as to send in the same amount of goods and get ten per cent more for so doing. My own view of this is that the Danes will use this tariff concession to increase their net return, rather than their sales. Therefore, I do not believe that, at least initially, Ireland will suffer in this field.

Whether Ireland should join the Seven is of course a matter for the Irish Government. There are some difficulties that emerge immediately because your secondary industries are pretty heavily protected by protective tariffs. These are matters which concern you and are no business of anyone else's. But the fact is this, just as the Common Market is not exclusive and will accept any other European country, so if the 'Little Seven' is formed, it will not be exclusive and will be open to any other European country who decides to join.

There are always difficulties about new concepts ; this is inevitable. What I am sure about is that whatever the difficulties, whatever the snags, the formation of the Common Market, the formation of the Seven—and afterwards, I hope, some association of the Seven with the Six—can do nothing but good for Europe and for the world ; in the peace and prosperity which this development can bring about, we shall all share.

(3) *by* Maurice Faure

THE first thing that I would advocate strongly is that we should continue, even in the face of apparent failure, our efforts to bring about unity between the two parts of Europe, and also to ensure that no cleavage should take place between the two types of international organization—the large international organizations such as the United Nations, the Council of Europe and O.E.E.C. on the one hand, and the Coal and Steel Community, Euratom and the Common Market on the other hand. These two types of international organization provide between them the machinery and the institutions required to bring about the objective of European unity which we seek to attain.

The importance of continuing to work towards this objective, despite all setbacks, lies in the fact that the role of Europe is not something

which ends at its boundaries. Not alone does it not end at the boundaries of the individual nations, but it does not end at the boundaries of Europe itself. Europe has traditionally—and all the more so to-day—a role which is a world role, a role in world affairs which it can fulfil only if it is strong, and to be strong it must be united.

Europe can never be built on a deep and lasting division, such as might emerge from a perpetuation of the split that has recently taken place between the Common Market and the Little Free Trade Area. We do not want such a deep and lasting division, and indeed, it would be utterly untrue to suggest that at any stage the Common Market sought to bring about any cleavage in the unity of Europe.

It may be that you who are outside the Common Market realize this, but whether you do or not, it is a vital fact which must be appreciated if you are to understand the situation that exists in Europe to-day, and to seek to remedy the division that has arisen.

Our reasons—the reasons of the Six—for starting and trying to build up a united Europe were threefold. In the first place we wished to end at long last the bitter rivalries which have torn apart our continent for so many centuries. Secondly, we sought to consolidate our countries in face of the menace of Soviet Russia. And finally we hoped to take advantage of technical advances which have been made and which can be exploited only on a large scale—so as to make the voice of Europe once more heard in the modern world. The voice of Europe was once powerful, but we must face and seek to remedy the fact that in recent decades it has lost much of its power.

The Little Europe, the Europe of the Six, or the Common Market, has at all times been a driving force for European unity ; had there been no Common Market, it is certain there would never have been any proposal for a European Free Trade Area. We have been reproached with having rushed ahead too fast—but our answer to that is simple and effective. If we had waited until every one of the seventeen members of O.E.E.C. decided to go as far as we were prepared to go, and if there had been even one country among the seventeen which did not want to do anything towards achieving some measure of European unification, who did not want to do anything towards a greater liberalization of trade for example, then we should still be waiting to start.

What we did was to go ahead with those who agreed with us on the need for urgent action. We wanted to show by the living reality of the Common Market what could be done ; so that this might provide an example to be followed by the others, in so far as they considered themselves able to follow along this path of unification.

Professor Hallstein has already stressed the living reality of the European Community. He emphasized the first steps that have been taken towards achieving a common social policy and a common agri-

cultural policy, as well as a common transport policy. We are not purely concerned with economic policies ; our interests are wider and deeper.

Thus the Community is not only a living reality as an economic organization ; it is also a psychological and political reality. Those of us who are concerned with political life in our different countries realize how true this is ; we realize that this new driving force, the psychological and political concept of a united Europe, has changed the thinking of our peoples, and has brought them to think in terms of working in the interest of the European community and not purely in the interest of their own nation.

We are now talking quite seriously of electing the delegates to the assemblies of Euratom and the Coal and Steel Community by universal suffrage on a community-wide basis. Such a proposal involves a completely new approach ; it would give these institutions a far greater democratic appeal than they now have, and at the same time it would put much more life and vigour into the work being carried out by these Assemblies.

I realize that the more I emphasize the strength of the Six, the more you may say to yourselves : ' But this is only increasing our worries and our difficulties, because the further ahead that the Six go on their own, the more difficult it will be for us to arrive at any agreement with them '. But I don't agree that this is the case at all ; I believe that if we keep in mind our common aims, there is absolutely no need for this cleavage to take place.

Apropos of this, however, it may be worth examining the reasons for the failure of the European Free Trade Area idea. I was myself in charge of the negotiations on behalf of the French Government for the first eighteen months, and while I feel that it might perhaps have been possible to have salvaged something from the wreckage, I believe that the negotiations were almost bound to fail, for the following reasons.

In the first place the British proposals were premature. I shall give an example of what I mean by this. In so far as the British proposals referred to agriculture at all, they suggested that modifications of existing agricultural policies should take place in the European Free Trade Area at the same pace as in the Common Market. But we had provided in the Common Market Treaty a period of two years in which a common agricultural policy was to be devised, and I do not think it is any secret that this period will in practice probably prove to be much longer than two years. Now if we in the Common Market are going to take at least two years to decide how to settle this agricultural question among ourselves, it is surely unrealistic to suggest that starting from scratch, we could settle this question with the eleven within this period.

The second vital reason why the European Free Trade Area negotiations failed was that the procedure adopted was defective. We know how difficult it is to negotiate between six different countries, but where you have seventeen countries, each with a right of veto, negotiations are almost doomed from the start.

Thirdly, there was too great a disequilibrium between the ambition of the British proposals and the modest means which they suggested should be employed to carry them through.

I might add that it was also unrealistic to propose that within the Free Trade Area no distinction should be made between the Six and the others. In GATT, and in all the other international organizations, it is recognized that you cannot deal with countries which are in a customs union, and countries which are not in a customs union with each other, as if they were exactly on the same footing, which is exactly what the British proposals sought to do.

Furthermore—and this reason, though it might appear relatively minor, was in fact very important—the psychological approach of the British was poor. As a result a good deal of ill-feeling developed between Britain and France. Many in France—although I myself was never among them—purported to see in the European Free Trade Area proposal an attempt by ' perfidious Albion ' to sow discord among the Six, and if possible to wreck the Common Market. It was widely thought that Britain was attempting to divide the Common Market partners by means of this proposal, in the hope that the Common Market might be prevented in this way from coming to fruition.

On the other hand, there was the British view that the good faith of France was very much brought into question by the policy adopted by France. I must admit that at times there were French actions which at least tended to lend some colour to that view. There was in fact a bad approach on both sides, from which, perhaps, we can learn something for the future. And one of the first lessons to be learnt on the British side must undoubtedly be this : that if we are to negotiate further in search of a common solution, these negotiations must be carried out on the basis that the Common Market exists, and works.

The fact that the Common Market is actually working is, indeed, one of the reasons why the climate for further negotiations between the two groups is to-day very much more favourable than it was last year. The Common Market has started ; it is more self-assured, and can afford, therefore, to be much more flexible and liberal in its approach to negotiations with countries outside its boundaries.

Another reason why I believe that the climate is now more favourable is that the situation of the two chief protagonists in last year's negotiations has now changed drastically. On the one hand the economic recovery of France, and the measures which were taken to bring this recovery

about, have had their effect ; France is no longer in the desperate straits in which she found herself during the period of the earlier negotiations. Accordingly she can afford to be more flexible in her approach to this question in future. At the same time we hope and believe that British public opinion will change and will broaden a little, and that the British themselves will begin to realize that they have a place in a United Europe.

We know very well that there can be no Europe without Britain. Even if her place in a United Europe cannot be quite the same as ours, even if she is not as fully integrated as, for example, the Six, nevertheless she must be in some form of very close and very direct association.

Thirdly, and this in my view is the most fundamental reason for the change in temper and atmosphere, it is beginning to be realized that the Six simply cannot pursue a protectionist policy. In the beginning it was feared that they might become another protectionist and possibly also imperialist bloc. Whereas at first the countries outside the Six looked on the moves towards a Common Market without concern, not thinking that they could or would succeed, when the Common Market actually began to work they jumped to the other extreme and treated it as a tragedy for the rest of the world. Now they are beginning to return to a position of balance and sanity, taking us seriously rather than lightly, as at first, or tragically, as they have done more recently.

There are four reasons why the Six cannot adopt a protectionist policy. The first and most vital one is that the Six is the largest single bloc importer of raw materials, importing as much as the United Kingdom and the United States combined. It is, if you like, a vast factory, a vast commercial enterprise, which depends for its very existence on the outside world, on trade with the outside world. It has to export to live, and to export it must import the materials required to make its exports ; therefore it would be complete insanity for the Six to try to pursue a protectionist policy when it is itself by its nature so very vulnerable.

Another factor is the change in the general economic climate since the last negotiations. When the European Free Trade Area negotiations started there was a great dollar scarcity, affecting all the countries of Europe. Now there is a plethora of dollars ; and while this may not last indefinitely, the situation has at any rate been drastically reversed for the moment. Indeed it has been reversed to such an extent that it is only a question of time—perhaps only months—before Article 14 of the IMF Charter (which gives to the European countries their right of protection vis-à-vis the dollar area) will have to be revoked and substituted by Article Eight. Article Eight is the one which, in view of the changed situation, will force us to lift our last quantitative restrictions on dollar imports.

My third reason, which is a very important and vital one, is our position vis-à-vis the underdeveloped countries of the world. To put it very simply, the backward countries will be industrialized—they must be industrialized—and it is a question of determining in what way, in what manner, they will be industrialized. Will they proceed to develop with our help, with our cooperation and in our general framework? Or, on the other hand, if we are powerless to help them, or perhaps indifferent, will they turn to the Communist countries which are naturally only too willing to extend their aid if they get a certain return for it. Clearly many of these countries will, if we fail them, legitimately turn to Communist countries and be industrialized in a Communist manner.

Now, the problem is one for the strong powers of the West in Europe, which must obviously help these countries to develop their basic industries first, viz., industries like textiles. If you are going to do that, if you are going to build up certain basic industries in the countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America, you cannot then turn round to them and say: 'I am sorry, we don't want your goods, because we produce them at home', for if you did that they could legitimately say that you had made them the dupes of your policies.

Therefore, we must be prepared to buy what they have to sell, when we have started to help them in the first instance. Now, since their labour is—and probably will remain for some time to come—very much cheaper than ours, we shall have to develop our industries technically so that we can still compete on our own markets with their products, and we will have to arrive at the stage where we can sell them motor-cars and other consumer goods in exchange for their basic materials. This, surely, even more than anything else of itself, is a reason why we in Europe must have a liberal economic policy.

Finally it is my view that the emergence of the Stockholm group, the Seven, can help the negotiations. It can help because the creation of this group is going to affect a great simplification by making possible a dialogue between the two parties—the Stockholm group on the one hand, and the Common Market on the other. I think that through bi-partite discussions of this kind they will be able to arrive at some sort of *modus vivendi*, although I think that this is hardly likely to be a formal one. I do not anticipate a formal, detailed treaty between the two groups, rather is it likely that there will be a series of agreements on various matters.

Now, what happens about the countries which are members of neither of the two new groups that have emerged in Europe—and more particularly for you—what happens to a country like Ireland?

In my opinion, if there is the *political* desire and the *political* determination to unify all the free countries of the West, then there is no technical, insuperable difficulty to the inclusion of any country in these groups.

In this connection I think it is significant to remember the reply of Mr Maudling to a Labour member on the question of why Britain could not go straightway into the Six. Mr Maudling did not quote the Commonwealth, which he could well have done because of its special circumstances. As a matter of fact had he quoted the Commonwealth, we might well have commented that at the time we signed the Treaty of Rome we, too, had certain overseas territories and nevertheless we managed to come into the Common Market and to cover these countries with a sort of *ad hoc* arrangement.

No, the answer of Mr Maudling was that, in his opinion, the people who signed the Treaty of Rome regarded it as a first step in the political integration of Europe towards a United States of Europe. I think, myself, that that is exactly what it was ; and I think, furthermore, that a political will and a political unity is essential. It is essential if we are going to maintain the position of Europe vis-à-vis the other continents, such as Africa, and it is vitally essential if we are going to do something about the problem of the reunification of Germany. A united Germany must be brought into the Western community, and in order to do that you have got to have a political will and not just a purely commercial and economic one.

Indeed, this political will which I talk about surpasses all the limited commercial aims, all the economic aims. You can well, perhaps, reproach me for being a dreamer ; but to my mind it is this political will for unity, for political integration which will not alone bring about the unity of Europe but will also preserve what is left of liberty in the Western world.

(4) *by* J. Flint Cahan

I do not believe that the Six and the Seven will resolve their present difficulties without the O.E.E.C. I realize that there is much behind what M. Faure says, when he remarked that the negotiations leading up to the failure of the Free Trade Area were characterized by being too diffuse, that you cannot negotiate with seventeen people, and that it may well be easier to negotiate directly between the Seven on the one hand and the Six on the other. That is just possible, but I wonder whether M. Faure—who must have even more painful memories of it than I have—remembers that during those negotiations in Paris, only too often the representative of the Six, having been briefed beforehand in a private meeting, was sent into the Conference room and told that he must say so-and-so. This does not make for easy negotiation. A series of set speeches is not a negotiation. I have a great fear that, between the Six on the one hand and the Seven on the other, if they

start speaking as blocs, the possibility of negotiation will be even less than it was among the Seventeen.

The Seven are negotiating something which they call an 'open-ended' Free Trade Area. This was a phrase that was used to me by people in London the other day—an 'open-ended' Free Trade Area, that is to say, anybody can join in, it is not going to have any political connotations; it is going to be purely economic. I simply don't believe it; I cannot imagine that it has no political connotations. It is perfectly right to say, as Dr Hallstein has said, as M. Faure has said, that the primary aim of the Six is political, it must continue to be political; and the primary aim of the Seven is political, whatever they may tell you.

It cannot possibly be otherwise; because as soon as they find themselves trading freely between themselves, they are bound to develop political desires and aims. Indeed they already have a political aim: that of creating something which will make some members of the Six wonder whether it is not better to push a little further in the direction of a Free Trade Area a little more quickly. This is their avowed aim, they shout it from the housetops.

So there are already in Europe two political bodies—and this is very important. I believe, with M. Faure, that we must arrive at some sort of political union in Europe if we wish to survive. How long it will take I have no idea. I do not believe we can possibly maintain what we regard as 'European civilization' in the wider sense of that term, unless we have some closer form of political union than anything we have managed up to now.

When I see these two groups setting themselves up—one in Brussels, temporary headquarters; one in Stockholm, with even more temporary headquarters, I hope—forgetting altogether that there exists in Paris an Organization which contains not six or seven or thirteen, but eighteen countries, which has a secretariat that works; I begin to ask myself, in the French phrase, whether they have 'fallen on their heads'. Surely it would be possible, within the framework of this existing institution, to get together to create the kind of Europe that we all want.

I appeal to the representatives here of the Governments of the Six and of the Seven, and to the representatives of the European Economic Community, not to leave this piece of machinery unused for too long. I have a grave fear that if it is not used it will rust and that we shall find ourselves being asked to create a new institution to deal with these problems, and that we shall waste a lot of time getting it going, when we could be using a perfectly adequate existing institution.

Now I shall turn to the problem of what the Irish are going to do about the present situation. That is, I suppose, what you expect to hear from me.

You have been left out in the cold by these negotiations. I would remind Mr Robens, in his temporary capacity as spokesman for Her Majesty's Government, that the Irish have been having trouble with the Danes for even longer than they have been having trouble with the English, and I suppose they will go on having it for some little time. But it is not very comforting to the Irish to know that the Danish farmer is going to have a larger profit rather than that he is going to sell more pigs to the British. I was not really taken in by that argument. My feeling is that these developments are not such a bad thing for Ireland as they may seem at first blush, but not at all for the reasons that have been advanced to you ; rather for quite different reasons about which I permitted myself to say something here a year ago.[1]

You did need a bit of a jolt. Some of you were getting complacent. The fact that you are now going to lose, probably for ever, your privileged position in the United Kingdom agricultural market, is going to give you the added incentive, which seemed to me to be lacking, to re-organize and re-orient your agricultural policies.

I believe that you have in your land, in your people, in your geographical nearness to these vast and developing markets, advantages which far outweigh the advantages which the British may be going to give to the Danes by way of Dane geld. A ten per cent tariff preference is nothing—absolutely nothing—compared to the advantages, the purely natural advantages, which you have if only you will exploit them. My belief, therefore, is that this Little Free Trade Area is, for Ireland, the kind of challenge which Ireland badly needed and to which Ireland can respond.

I hate to shock you twice in the same afternoon, but it is going to hit you on the industrial side, too. As M. Faure said, as Professor Hallstein said, the Six are clearly moving towards free trade in general. I believe with them that, despite the pressure of industrialists in France and in Italy, where they tend to be basically protectionist, the Six will move in the direction of free trade. The Seven are going to do the same thing. The Scandinavian members of the Seven are already free-trade-minded to a considerable extent. The British, too, are tending in that direction. So you are going to find yourselves, whether there is in the immediate future an agreement between the Six and the Seven or not, on the edge of a vast community, or of two communities, which are tending towards freer trade. You cannot possibly escape this movement. Indeed, it would do you a great deal of good if you didn't try. So you are going to find yourselves pushed, by the pressure of events, also to reduce your tariffs on manufactured goods and to reduce the protection which you give in this way to your industries. You are going

[1] cf. 'Ireland's Role in a Free Trade Area' *Studies* : Summer, 1958, pp. 121-30.

to have to work to render those industries fully competitive without tariff protection. I am convinced that this is what is going to happen to you.

So you have quite a hard row to hoe between now and the end of the century, when I suspect we shall have free trade. But I put it as long ahead as that, because it is not going to come quickly.

Mr Hallstein and M. Faure spoke about Mr Dillon's proposal. I don't believe that the Americans are ready for anything like free trade or that they will be for another generation, or maybe more. The Americans are not going to go very far in the direction of reducing their tariff. I don't attach, myself, the same importance as other people have done, to these proposals. I cannot believe that out of them will come a genuine Atlantic Free Trade Community—at least, in the immediate future. But I do think that it is the job of the Six, of the Seven, of the whole of O.E.E.C., to push forward for a European Free Trade community of some kind. It is possible that this can be done within the O.E.E.C., and that it will contain the political entity of the Six, the political entity of the Seven, nevertheless trading together on terms of freer trade, and giving an opportunity to Ireland and other countries to come in, on condition that you are prepared to come in on the terms which are offered, and not on special terms.

We discussed in the O.E.E.C. during the last year the terms on which some countries might join the Free Trade Area. Various suggestions were made about making life easier for these countries, but I do not think you should pin great hopes on this possibility. I am sorry to be pessimistic again on this point, but it does seem to me that opinion is moving in the direction of saying that any attempt on the part of the Europeans to give special privileges to certain European countries is going to be doomed to failure.

We have already seen, in Geneva, in the GATT, how difficult it has been for the Six to convince some of the other members of GATT, and particularly the less developed countries, that their Customs Union is not directed against the interests of these underdeveloped countries. It is going to be equally difficult for the British and the Swedes and their friends to explain their new free trade area to the underdeveloped countries of GATT. They are bound, in the course of these explanations, to give undertakings that they will not use it as an instrument which could hurt the interests of these less developed countries. And in giving these undertakings, they will be bound to tie their hands as regards the conditions under which they can admit new members to their Group. I do not know quite how the Seven intend to treat the problem of Portugal, for example, but I should be surprised if anything like the range of special privileges which we were discussing in the O.E.E.C. negotiations can possibly be given to Portugal at this stage.

The *Irish Times* said this morning that ' all that is left for Ireland is to make the best of the bad bargain that remains '. Of course, it is hardly a bargain, because it takes two to make a bargain, and I do not think you were asked ; but the situation is as black as the writer of this leader suggests, in the sense that the developed countries of Europe are going to go ahead without you. They are, for the moment, going ahead in two separate groups. I believe with M. Faure that they must come together one day and I hope that it will be soon, but I am not at all optimistic about that. I am, on the contrary, rather pessimistic.

Professor Hallstein and the Governments of the Six are going to need a period for consolidation, for putting their own affairs in order, before they are really ready to contemplate joining a wider association. The Seven, too, are going to find, that having created this new Little Free Trade Area with great speed, they need a period of time for consolidation, before they move to anything wider. I agree with the suggestion which was made by one speaker that possibly there will be a series of *ad hoc* agreements between the two communities for a time, rather than some formal general association.

So it will be some time, I think, before the wider negotiations, in which Ireland can take part, will be resumed. There will be some talks, but I do not myself foresee wider negotiations in the immediate future. This is pessimistic ; but one must be a realist in these matters. It is no use fooling yourselves. You are not going to have a wider Free Trade Area this year or next year. That is quite clear. I believe that the good-will exists. I do not suggest for a moment either that Dr Hallstein and his friends want to divide Europe or that the British want to divide Europe. I am quite sure they do not. But Europe is now divided, and it is going to take some hard work to get it undivided—if that is a word.

In the meantime, Ireland is going to be faced with increasing competition from Denmark in her principal market and possibly with increasing competition from Holland as well ; for it must be part of what I think Mr Robens called a ' bridge '—a bridge between the Six and the Seven—that some arrangements will have to be made with the other large suppliers of these products to the United Kingdom market. You can expect that ' feather-bedding ' will become thinner and thinner as far as you are concerned, and you can expect, too, that it will be necessary for you to re-consider your own policies of industrial protection. Is it desirable, is it healthy, is it right, to continue the policy of relatively high protection for Irish industry in a world which is becoming increasingly a free trade world ? The danger is that it will perpetuate, perhaps even that it will be used to start off, industries which are not capable of surviving on their own feet and which will, therefore, one day become a burden on your economy.

If Europe really succeeds in breaking down trade barriers—even though I cannot go as far as M. Maurice Faure's dream of an Atlantic Free Trade Area—if there is really a European Free Trade Area, if the tariff barriers are removed, European industry will become considerably more efficient than it is today. Because only the more efficient units can survive, in those circumstances, and you are going to find yourselves under increasing pressure, in response to which you have two possibilities. One is to raise your protection of your industries until it reaches astronomical levels, the other is to get rid of it and to make industry more efficient by other means.

The picture before you is not, therefore, very bright. I have been warned never to be pessimistic in front of Irish audiences. There is a tendency to pessimism in Ireland which, I am told, has to be fought against. I wish I knew a magic formula that I could give you to induce you to fight against it, because, personally, if I were living here, I would not be in the least pessimistic. I would take note of these black clouds on the horizon, but I believe that the chances of getting some real progress as a result of these difficulties are very great indeed. I do not know how many of you really wallow in the statistics which are produced from time to time by your Government. Some of them are extremely interesting. I have been looking at some of them lately and I have also been looking at the rate of increase in productivity and production in Ireland. It is slow and steady, but it is going on.

It seemed to me that if you set yourselves the task, not of increasing production by one or two per cent per year but of increasing it by six or seven or eight per cent, that you could achieve it. I believe that the basic fundamental infra-structure, on which a very considerable increase in agricultural production and efficiency could take place, exists in Ireland.

All our experts tell me that I am right. And so I would say to you, today, that there is not a great deal of hope of finding an easy solution to this problem. It is going to be a hard road, particularly for a country which is neither of the Six nor of the Seven. The long term result, it seems to me, is almost certain to be, as Mr Robens said, a general rise of the standard of life, not only in the United Kingdom, which is your big market, but in Germany, which is a potentially big market for you, too. The Six, despite their common agricultural policy, are simply not going to be able to feed the Germans, and they realize that. The Germans are going to have to import food in very considerable quantities from beyond the borders of the Six. There is no doubt about this. Ireland is a natural supplier, just as Denmark is. You have nothing to fear, but you do have to prepare yourselves for it. You must make yourself, both in the industrial sphere and in the agricultural sphere, sufficiently productive and efficient to be able to compete on these new terms.

To conclude—as regards the prospects for a European Free Trade Area as we conceived it a year ago, I think they are very dim indeed. The prospects in the longer term for some kind of an association—which will include, I hope, all the members of O.E.E.C.—are, I think, much brighter. Politicians and statesmen are beginning to realize that concessions here and there will have to be made in order to achieve this. This is a political issue.

I believe, finally, that although this may take some time, and perhaps be difficult, there is in it a kind of challenge which will enable Ireland to go forward to much bigger and much brighter things.

The Current Chinese Steel Campaign: A Brief History and Evaluation

by EDWARD J. BRENNAN

THE Chinese Communists are consumed by a burning desire to transform, within the shortest possible space of time, the teeming millions under their control into an industrial nation. In no respect is the intensity of this desire more apparent than in the current steel production campaign which has so intrigued and, at times, baffled the West. Launched without warning in the closing months of 1958, the year of the ' leap forward ', the campaign rapidly assumed nation-wide dimensions, involved incredible exertions on the part of all participants and culminated, at the end of the year, in the official claim to a production figure of 11.08 m. tons or over twice that of 1957 (5.35 m. tons). With unabated zeal the Chinese Communists have set their sights even higher in this, the year of ' the coordinated chess-game '. The steel target for 1959 is a staggering 18 m. tons.

The original main prop of this extraordinarily ambitious undertaking was a nation-wide constellation of countless primitive iron-smelting furnaces ranging from mud-brick monsters to discarded oil-drums of minute proportions. By the close of 1958, sixty million people were directly serving in the cause of steel, and the number of furnaces had reached the astronomical total of 600,000. With the coming of 1959 a trend towards furnace centralization set in. The larger units have been concentrated into ' complexes ' called ' provincial steel-centres ', and the role of the small furnace, formerly exalted in the Party press, has been unobtrusively relegated to oblivion.

Most Western commentators have been at a loss to know what to make of the whole affair, and opinion as to the reliability of the Chinese claims has been divided. Not a few commentators have derided the entire undertaking as a big flop. Others have preferred to withhold judgment, while a few have taken the Chinese claims at face-value[1]. This present commentary represents an attempt, through utilization of material from the Chinese Communist press, to go behind the outer façade of the steel campaign and to reconstruct how it has actually

[1] e.g. Solomon Adler, ' China : World Industrial Power '. *The Nation*, April 18, 1959, pp. 327-31.

developed and with what result to date. And, since the present campaign is but one aspect of a larger issue, the long-term prospects of the Chinese steel industry are briefly examined.

I

One fact at least is not open to question. We have it on the authority of Mao Tse-tung himself that the cadres could not believe that the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Party was in earnest when it issued, on 1 September 1958, a call to the entire nation to double steel output by the end of the year. When the numerous problems in the way of attaining to this goal are considered, it is not so difficult to see why the party functionaries throughout the nation felt that this latest exhortation was but another in the apparently interminable series of unrealistic productivity drives concocted by the starry-eyed zealots on the Central Committee.

The cadres were probably quick to point out to one another that the clarion call was primarily addressed, not to the workers of modern metallurgical enterprises like Anshan or Penki, but to the masses, 80 per cent of whom were illiterate peasants. Those cadres who read their newspapers faithfully were probably spreading the word that the Ministry of Metallurgical Industry regarded the latest target as utopian[1] and that the Party élite itself was sharply divided on both the practicability of the goal and the advisability of ' relying on the masses '.[2]

The most vulnerable Province was Liaoning. Here were located the country's pride and joy, Anshan, which, together with the less notable steel plants at Shenyang, Penki and Lushun-Dairen, were to turn out 44 per cent of the urgently needed 10.7 m. tons of steel. Even more importantly, these were the plants which were to supply thousands of bellows, blast furnaces and medium and small open hearths, converters and steel-rolling machines to other provinces. It is small wonder, then, that the Party Committee for Liaoning Province were careful to safe-

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[1] In a highly unusual admission the New China News Agency (hereafter cited as NCNA) reported in an English-language release on 7 March, 1958 that ' when the original 1958 steel output target of 6.24 million tons was being discussed by the Planning Department of the Ministry [of Metallurgical Industry], many functionaries there considered the target would be rather difficult to reach '. American Consulate General, Hong Kong, *Survey of the China Mainland Press* (hereafter cited as SCMP), No. 1732, p. 11.

[2] Peking *Jen Min Jih Pao* (hereafter cited as JMJP) editorial admissions of 8 August and 3 November, 1958 (SCMP No. 1836, pp. 10-11, No. 1895, pp. 22-23). As proof of widespread scepticism among the lower-level cadres throughout the country the following admission by the Anhwei Provincial Committee may be cited : ' The Committee pointed out that for a smooth fulfillment of this year's steel and iron production, it would be necessary to have politics assume command in a relentless struggle against erroneous ideas. In a number of areas, advocates of requisite conditions and sceptics had appeared, and it would be necessary to criticise them resolutely by means of great contention and blooming '. NCNA-Chinese, Peking, 3 September, 1958 (SCMP No. 1855, p. 19)

guard their rear in an obviously lost battle against time.[1] On the day after the call to the nation they issued a long, plaintive report of the difficulties facing them. Raw materials for steel-making were scarce, there was a shortage of electricity for power because of the 'long dry spell this year', and there was a grave shortage of transportation.[2] A little more than a month later, on 13 October, the Liaoning Provincial Committee of the Party underwent a major purge. It is interesting, in the context of the steel campaign, to note that one of the 'crimes' of the 'anti-party' group was 'Liaoning's failure to make outstanding achievements'.[3]

The cadres of other provinces were more discreet. They dutifully went through the motions of launching an iron-smelting campaign. Since the peasants had been ordered into communes by the same party conference as had called for the increase in steel output, the cadres found it relatively easier to assemble giant work-brigades charged with such diverse tasks as going off to the mountains to hunt for coal and iron ore, with transporting to the furnaces the minerals when found or where available, with tending the hastily constructed mud-brick furnaces (pending receipt of the modern units promised by Liaoning) and with transporting the metallic product to distant assembly-points for eventual shipment to a modern centre which would refine it into steel.

Heeding the stern call of the *People's Daily* to 'live and eat with the workers and masses and work with them to complete plans day by day' many cadres proceeded to 'study technical problems day and night together with the ordinary workers'.[4] Having made this act of self-sacrifice, they proceeded to drive the people almost beyond human endurance. In Southern Shantung, for example, a cadre had under his command one hundred thousand people who 'sleep only two or three hours a day',[5] while in Kiangsi Province, 'despite pestering autumn rains . . . more than 120,000 people are mining ore day and night'.[6]

But, as Mao soon found out, all this regimented activity was but a façade which concealed the inner scepticism of the cadres as to the merits of the entire undertaking. From 10–29 September 1958 Mao, toured the Yangtse Valley with the openly avowed aim of examining at first hand the progress of the iron-smelting campaign. What he saw pleased him not one whit, and on his return to Peking he declared :

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[1] 'At the time when the . . . Central Committee set the steel production target of 10,700,000 tons for this year, the national output covering the eight months to August was only slightly over 4,000,000 ton, and there were only four months left to produce the remaining 6,000,000 tons'. Peking JMJP editorial 3 November, 1958 (SCMP No. 1895, p. 23)

[2] NCNA-Chinese, Shenyang, 2 September, 1958, (SCMP No. 1855, pp. 14-15)

[3] American Consulate General, Hong Kong, *Current Background*, No. 546, p. 17. cf. SCMP, No. 1925, pp. 29-38

[4] NCNA-English, Peking, 29 September 1958

[5] NCNA-English, Peking, 29 September 1958

[6] NCNA-English, Peking, 27 September 1958

> A number of localities and enterprises have failed to mobilise the masses properly. They fail to hold mass meetings, to explain clearly the tasks, reasons, and methods to the masses, and to conduct debates among the masses. Even now there are still some of our comrades who are unwilling to carry out large-scale mass movements in the development of industry. They regard this movement as 'irregular', 'of rural style', and 'analogous to the practice of guerilla warfare'. These views are obviously wrong.[1]

Mao's reprimand was taken to heart. The campaign was intensified.

II

The philosophy behind the nation-wide iron-smelting campaign was enticingly simple and merits citation at length.

> There are many good points large and medium-sized modern steel and iron plants can boast of; but, as building them involves a great deal of money . . . this is not feasible at the moment . . . It is admitted that small and native iron-smelting and steel-refining furnaces are inferior in technique to large and medium-sized modern layouts, but they do have some good points which the latter do not have. They involve smaller investments and simpler equipment; they can be built up in shorter periods of time . . . , they suit the specific conditions of our country, the resources of which are widely scattered over its vast expanse; and they will ensure a relatively even development of the economy in its various areas . . . A small furnace may not produce much iron and steel but when there are scores of thousands of such furnaces, the aggregate production will be a torrent of molten iron and steel. Honan, for example, expects to build, in reliance on the masses, some 30,000 simple native blast furnaces this year with a productive capacity of 4 m. tons of iron. This will equal the current output of the Anshan Steel Plant. We do not mean that we expect each and every other one of the provinces and autonomous regions to build so many furnaces but if we can count on one-fourth of them to accomplish that much, are we not going to have seven Anshan Steel Plants in our country?[2]

It would, of course, be naive to assume that the policy-makers really believed that 30,000 primitive furnaces could do the work of Anshan. Otherwise Liaoning and Honan, between them, could have doubled the country's pig iron output. But this statement of policy does show that great things were expected from the 'native' furnaces despite their obvious limitations.[3]

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[1] NCNA-Chinese, Peking, 30 September, 1958 (SCMP, No. 1871, p. 9)

[2] Peking *JMJP* editorial of 8 August, 1958 (SCMP, No. 1836, p 10)

[3] 'Pig iron made with modern furnaces cannot meet the demand of steel-making, and over three-fourths of our steel has to be made from iron processed by native furnaces'. Peking JMJP editorial of 3 November, 1958 (SCMP, No. 1895, p. 22)

What these limitations were likely to be can be deduced relatively easily if the main principles of modern steel-making are recalled.

Despite many experiments it has not yet been found possible to manufacture, on a commercial basis, steel directly from iron ore. It is necessary, first of all, to produce pig iron. This latter metal, necessarily of high carbon content because of the influence of coke, is produced in the blast furnace by a process which consists essentially of burning coke in the presence of iron ore, limestone and dolomite. The furnace itself is a huge steel shell, often nearly 100 ft high, lined throughout with heat-resisting brick and served by three or four large gas-burning cylindrical steel towers (' stoves ') which supply a combustion-promoting blast of hot air (1250° F) to the lower part of the furnace where a temperature of over 3,600° F is attained. To produce one ton of pig iron the typical modern blast furnace requires an average of over 3 tons of raw materials and 4 tons of air.[1]

Such in sketchy outline are the formidable—and expensive—requirements of modern blast furnace operation. And yet the refining effects of the blast furnace are limited. All of the phosphorus and much of the silicon, manganese and sulphur that were originally present in the ore and coke present an impervious front to the fluxing action of the limestone and dolomite and remain in the iron. In addition, the resulting iron has taken 3 per cent to 4½ per cent carbon from the coke ; and carbon, like the other elements just mentioned, greatly influences the properties of steel and therefore its uses.

In its simplest form, steel is refined pig iron, the carbon content of which has been reduced to less than 2 per cent and from which the additional chemical elements referred to have been removed almost entirely or at least drastically in quantity. Depending on the predominating chemical elements in the pig iron reaching the steel plant, either of the two principal steelmaking processes are used—the basic (or lime-using) and the acid. Carbon, manganese and silicon can be removed with relative ease by either of these two processes. The trouble-makers are phosphorus and sulphur which, if not present in excessive amounts can be removed by the basic process which can be either pneumatic (Bessemer) or open-hearth. So far as phosphorus is concerned its presence in an amount up to 1 per cent is permissible for the open-hearth, while the basic Bessemer actually requires a phosphorus content of at least 2 per cent for the maintenance of the afterblow. The phosphorus problem is therefore remediable but the cure is tricky. Sulphur, on the other hand, is the villain of the piece. More than comparatively small amounts of this element are undesirable in most steels, and its

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[1] United States Steel Corporation, *The Making, Shaping and Treating of Steel*, (Pittsburg, Pa., 1957), p. 223

removal by even the basic process is either uncertain or expensive or both. Hence pig iron containing less than 0.05 per cent sulphur is a standard requirement in modern steel making practice.[1]

It is clear from the foregoing that phosphorus and sulphur are of great importance in dictating the quality of the iron ore and coke which shall be permitted to enter the blast furnace. And it is also evident that these same two elements determine what pig iron can be accepted at the steelmaking plant. An ingot of steel embodies, therefore, a constant vigilance over chemical quality which extends back through a complicated series of technical processes to the moment when iron ore and coke were assembled for charging into the blast furnace. It was at this initial and basic stage that disaster struck the Chinese steel campaign, and the culprits were phosphorus and sulphur.

The Peking planners were not unaware that this problem was likely to present itself. But apparently the official viewpoint was that, if iron-smelting were made a nation-wide affair, a satisfactory proportion of suitable iron could somehow be salvaged. Disillusionment was not long setting in, and on 3 November 1958, the *People's Daily* issued an urgent call to the nation.

> While we are basically successful in quantity, we are not yet so in quality, especially in regard to iron produced with native furnaces. Although there are some other problems on the steel and iron front, quality is the vital problem at present and must be solved at once. Much of the pig iron now produced by the various provinces has a high phosphorus and sulphur content and cannot be conveniently used for making steel ; some of the iron cannot be directly used for steel making and casting . . . Improvement of the quality of native iron . . . has therefore become a matter of burning urgency. *Without this improvement, steel output will not grow,* and concentration on quantity with scant regard for quality will prevent the successful fulfillment of the production mission.[2]

The key to satisfactory pig iron quality lay of course in proper selection and grading of iron ore and coke and in their combustion under scientifically controlled conditions. To call upon primitive furnaces utilizing indiscriminately mined and hand-hammered ore and coal to solve a problem created by the very methods encouraged was not only wishful thinking. It betrayed a fantastic ignorance of the basic principles of metallurgy.

Nothing daunted, Po I-po, chairman of the State Economic Commission announced on 21 December that, as of two days earlier, 10.73 m. tons of steel had been produced. But what he had to say of the uses

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[1] *The Making, Shaping and Treating of Steel* pp. 144, 252, 266, 282

[2] JMJP, 3 November, 1958 (SCMP. No. 1895, p. 22) italics supplied.

to which locally produced iron were put gave, to those able to read between the lines, a revealing hint of what had really happened.

> Meanwhile, *the uses for iron and steel produced by simple, improvised furnaces are being constantly broadened.* Crude iron has been made into ' crude ' ball-graphite cast iron, with mechanical qualities close to ball-graphite cast iron produced by pig-iron smelted by modern furnaces. In many areas, steel products have been made from crude steel ; crude iron and steel have even been used to turn out machinery.[1]

What seems to have happened, therefore, is that the iron of the local furnaces ceased eventually to be indiscriminately transported to the steel plants. Instead, the iron was used locally, in many instances being laboriously hammered into crude steel, and the nation's steel stocks were deemed to have been increased by an equivalent amount.

It is also worth noting that, even if the local furnaces produced pig iron of satisfactory quality, the transportation system of the country could not possibly cope with the problem of getting it in sufficient quantities to the steel plants. It took only sixteen days after the launching of the nation-wide smelting campaign last year for the Peking planners to find out that they had a transportation crisis on their hands. On 17 September the Ministry of Communications was obliged to issue an ' emergency directive ' calling upon an already overworked population to start carrying ' supplies for iron and steel production '. Confessing that ' the situation is tense ' the *People's Daily* called for another ' mobilization ' of the unfortunate masses who were to ' push carts, pole boats and carry loads on poles or in bags '. As for the countless furnaces far from railways and navigable waterways, the newspaper could only suggest that priority of transportation be given to ' good ' pig iron. Unfortunately no advice was offered as to how the unskilled cadres were to determine what iron was ' good ' and how it could, in any event, be readily delivered. At present the transportation problem is still so ' tense ' that foodstuffs awaiting shipment are rotting in many areas.[2] As a consequence, ambitious plans for the pushing of railways into poorly populated areas have been sharply revised. The emphasis this year is to be on double-tracking of existing lines and their extension through spurs.[3]

This change of emphasis in the field of communications has been paralleled by a discreet retreat, though by no means a full one, on the metallurgical front. The stress is now on using the native furnaces in a ' concentrated ' manner, that is, in large clusters near the mines and,

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[1] NCNA-Chinese, Peking 21 December, 1958 (SCMP, No. 1928, p. 14). Italics supplied.
[2] Admission by Tseng Ch'uan-liu in *Ta-kung Pao* of 26 March, 1959 (SCMP, no. 1996, p. 3)
[3] Lu Cheng-tsao (Vice-Minister of Railways) in speech to National People's Congress, 25 April, 1959. *Current Background,* no. 575, p. 23

whenever possible, close also to railways and roads. And, to the extent that hard-pressed Liaoning can keep up with needs, various key provincial areas are being provided with small, modern blast furnaces and Bessemer converters to permit less primitive, though scarcely much more efficient, utilization of local ore and coal resources.[1]

III

The Chinese Communists are in a big hurry to create an industrial nation. Out of this desire has come the urgent call for more steel. And growing balance of payments difficulties vis-à-vis the Soviet Union, coupled with their senior partner's miserliness in granting credits for capital imports, probably explain the sudden emphasis on the need to attain steel targets through greater reliance on indigenous initiative and resources. But how are we to explain the apparent blindness of the Peking planners to the serious technological objections to the use of primitive furnaces to which were assigned the utopian task of producing pig-iron suitable for processing at the modern steel plants?

To this intriguing and, at first sight, baffling question is an answer which is as simple as it is incredible. It is simple because the answer is to be found in the famous Marxist dialectic. And it is incredible because it is difficult for the West to comprehend the degree to which the Marxist metaphysician has supplanted the scientist and the engineer in industrial planning and administration.

When the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party voted last year to issue the call to set up people's communes and to make steel a nation-wide affair, it probably did so after a long haranguing from a group of doctrinaire, ruthless fanatics most likely spearheaded by Mao and Liu Shao-chi. It cannot be said that these zealots were unacquainted with the technical obstacles involved in local iron-smelting. A very mild version of the iron-smelting campaign had been tried earlier in 1958, and the results, especially as to iron quality, had proved very disappointing.

Nevertheless, iron-making was made a national concern in September last. The results, in this second attempt, were, as already outlined, just as disappointing. The commonsense thing to have done before the end of 1958 was obviously to disband the local furnaces and to stop the frightful misdirection of manpower and resources into a senseless enterprise. But the doctrinaire faction was not one whit abashed. It

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[1] JMJP editorial of 3 March, 1959 (SCMP, no. 1975, pp. 18-22)

had one final and invincible weapon in its armoury, the Marxian dialectical ' law ' of the transmutation of quantity into quality.[1]

> Some people . . . remain dubious about the policy [of operating small furnaces]. They say that the quality of iron is too poor for making steel and that it is the intrinsic limitations of the small and native furnaces which are responsible for this ; intrinsic limitations cannot be changed. We look at the matter in a way entirely different from that of the sceptics. We say that comparatively low quality is inevitable at the start . . . but that it is a mistake to say that anything that comes out of small and native furnaces is bad without any hope of improvement. Quantity and quality are related in dialectics. Without quantity, there can be no quality ; only with quantity can there be quality. Everything develops from a low to high plane, rising steadily, and steel and iron production is no exception.[2]

It is as well to stress at this point that this specific invasion of the field of the technician by the Marxist metaphysician is no isolated phenomenon. There is ample evidence at hand to show that the lot of the Chinese technical expert is a very unhappy one. At no time was this more clearly brought to light than during the short-lived Hundred Flowers period (February-May, 1957) in the course of which Mao encouraged the intelligentsia to vent its grievances freely and publicly.

A case in point is the flood of criticism which came from the engineers and technicians employed by the various Central Government Departments in Peking. The common concensus was that ' Party cadres often monopolize the work which falls within the duties of non-Party technical persons ', that these cadres ' are fond of showing off . . . and are unwilling to go into the thick of reality to study and solve concrete problems of technology '. To quote a specific instance, an engineer at the Ministry of Metallurgical Industry complained that

> the atmosphere of technical study is not strong . . . and in examining designs the Ministry's meetings often substitute policies for technical conclusions. Because of this, many abstruse problems of technology are often ignored and little is done to solve technical problems by way of technical research.[3]

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[1] ' This law professes to explain the appearance of new qualities and the consequence of their emergence. Change takes place by imperceptible quantitative mutations until there arrives a point, which Hegel calls the ' node ', beyond which a thing cannot vary while remaining the same. The classical illustration of this is the change of state of a substance, as when water turns to steam at 100° C and into ice at 0° C '. R. N. Carew Hunt, *The Theory and Practice of Communism* : *An Introduction* (New York, 1951), p. 14.

[2] Peking, JMJP, 3 November, 1959 (SCMP no. 1895, p. 23). It is not unlikely that this editorial was inspired by Mao who had written in similar vein in 1937 in his essay, ' On Contradiction '. Mao, *Selected Works* (4 vols., London, 1955), Vol. I, pp. 298–338. It is significant that this policy of ' walking on two legs ' (i.e. simultaneous development of large and small industrial enterprises) was justified in a special article on that topic in the Peking *Ta-kung Pao* on 18 May, 1959 (SCMP, no. 2024, pp. 1–6) by reference to this essay of Mao.

[3] NCNA-Chinese, Peking, 18 May, 1957 (SCMP no. 1541, p. 15)

Unfortunately for the 'experts,' their complaints bore no fruit. The period allowed for freedom of expression lasted only a few months, and Marxism once again took command of science. If anything, the lot of the technician and the scientist became even more intolerable as the press unleashed a violent campaign against all intellectuals. They were denounced as ivory-tower bookworms deceiving the gullible masses into believing that only the 'experts' could handle complicated technical problems. As the *People's Daily* exclaimed: 'there is nothing mysterious about science; it is something which can be learned and mastered by anybody'.[1]

Mao had once said: 'many of the so-called intellectuals are actually exceedingly unlearned and the knowledge of the workers and peasants is sometimes greater than theirs'.[2] This was a theme which, until a few months ago, the press belaboured *ad nauseam*. The productive 'inexhaustible wisdom of the masses' was sharply contrasted with the sterile and drone-like activity of the experts who threw cold water on all 'creative' plans for increasing production. In August of last year, therefore, all the 5,000 teachers and students of Peking Agricultural University were suddenly packed off to the rural areas to learn from the peasants. 'Teachers', we are told 'found it hard to go on teaching when many book rules were negated by practice'.[3]

The episode is typical of the sustained effort to lower the status of the expert and to blacken his reputation in the eyes of a people traditionally deferential to the learned man. The steel campaign has seen the stock of the technical experts plummet to an all-time low. Is it possible that the mess which ensued from ignoring their views will force the doctrinaire clique to restore to respectability this hitherto much abused class? There are some grounds for believing that a change of heart may be impending. The *People's Daily* recently stressed that 'opinions antagonistic to our own are not necessarily wrong' and has even confessed that 'there are times when the opinion of the majority is wrong and that of the opposite group of people is correct'[4]. Some Western commentators believe that statements like these portend major policy changes.[5] But it must be recalled that as far back as 23 September, 1957, Teng Hsiao-ping, General Secretary of the Central Committee, made an even stronger admission when he said: 'the absolute majority of the views brought forward by the intellectuals during the period

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[1] Peking JMJP, 22 May, 1958 (SCMP no. 1780, p. 42)

[2] Mao, 'Reform in Learning, the Party and Literature' (February 1, 1942), Boyd Compton ed., *Mao's China: Party Reform Documents, 1942–44* (Seattle, Wash., 1952), p. 15. cf. Mao, *Selected Works*, Vol. IV, p. 32

[3] NCNA-Chinese, Peking, 27 August, 1958 (SCMP, no. 1847, p. 9)

[4] Hou T'ieh-ping, 'Be Full of Strategy and Good Judgment', Peking JMJP, 9 May, 1959 (SCMP, no. 2035, p. 9)

[5] e.g. Greg Mac Gregor, 'Criticism on Rise Again in Red China Over Leadership', *New York Times* (International Edition), 27 July, 1959, pp. 1 and 6

of full and open discussion are correct, and they should be earnestly studied and dealt with'.[1] Far from following this advice, the Central Committee decided to squeeze the intellectuals. Whether their lot will be improved in the immediate future therefore remains in doubt. Whatever decision is taken, it will, of course, determine the final shape of the drive to produce more steel in the shortest possible time.

Any discussion of the current steel campaign inevitably raises a larger issue: how has the modern sector of the Chinese steel industry been faring and what are its long-term prospects? And, more especially, does China possess sufficient iron ore and metallurgical coal reserves to enable her to attain to the status of an important steel producing nation?

The record of steel achievements to date is a solid one, though it be far less impressive than the Chinese Communists would like us to believe. They are now fond of stressing that, as a consequence of the 'leap forward' last year, steel production rose, within the short space of nine years to a level ten times as great as that achieved in the 'pre-liberation' peak-production year of 1943. And they have noted that in the 59-year period extending from 1890 to 1949 the country produced only 7.6 m. tons of steel, or less than the amount claimed for 1958 alone.

Several considerations combine to impair the impressiveness of this record. First, until the Manchu dynasty was unseated in 1911, officialdom, both in Peking and throughout the provinces, presented, with a few notable exceptions, a solid front of opposition to the introduction of Western technology. Secondly, the establishment of the Republic was ushered in by country-wide disorders which took the form, first, of inter-warlord conflicts and, later, of a civil war between the Kuomintang and the Communists. Thirdly, the Japanese, after the Russo-Japanese war of 1904-05 established an economic hold over China's only industrial base, southern Manchuria, which was formally detached from the parent body in 1931. Fourthly, from 1937 onwards the disaster of foreign invasion was added to China's domestic woes. The cumulative result was progressive impoverishment and economic chaos. In 1949 China's steel output was only 158,000 tons.

However, when the Communists took over in 1949, the overall metallurgical picture, though bleak, held great potentialities. The country, now at peace and free from foreign interference, was in the grip of a régime both willing and able to allocate resources to building up heavy industry at the expense of current consumption. And, above all, the steel industry of Manchuria, though looted of possibly two-

[1] Teng Hsiao-ping, 'Report on the Rectification Campaign', *Current Background*, no. 477, p. 8. This was a document presented to a plenary session of the Central Committee on September 23, 1957.

thirds of its capacity by the Soviets in 1945, was capable of being restored to its peak (1943) capacity through a modest outlay. For, under the Japanese, Manchuria, though operating at only about 60 per cent of capacity, had reached an annual production level of close to 2 m. tons of pig iron but only 900,000 tons of steel. Hence, by utilizing to full capacity the older furnaces and hearths left intact and by exporting enough to import replacements, the Communists would not have found it unduly difficult to approach quickly the 1943 figure for pig iron and even exceed it for steel.[1] Such in fact was the position attained in 1952. In that year, which marked the end of the national reconstruction period and perfected the groundwork for the First Five Year Plan (1953-57), steel production was convincingly claimed to be 1.349 m. tons.

One of the most important features of the five-year plan as a whole was the publicly proclaimed stress on the 'principle that industrial productivity should be properly distributed in the various regions to make industry close to the producing areas of raw materials and fuel and to the consumption regions, and conformable to the conditions of national defence so as to gradually change the present unreasonable state of distribution and raise the economic level of the backward areas'[2]

In their metallurgical planning the Communists have given concrete expression to this principle by setting about the construction, far inland, of two major iron and steel complexes which are to supplement the output of the further extended facilities of Liaoning. One complex is being built at Wuhan on the Yangtse, the other at Paotow on the great northern bend of the Yellow River which encloses here the vast Ordos Desert. Both plants are to have the latest automated equipment; their blast furnaces and open hearths are to be among the biggest in the world. The Paotow installation will be partially operative this October. The Wuhan plant has already gone into partial production. While the full capacity of each of these two plants is a closely guarded secret, it is probable that each, when in full operation several years from now, will be able to produce some 2 m. tons of finished steel annually.

Supplementing the efforts of Liaoning, Paotow and Wuhan will be some 18 provincial, medium-sized enterprises. During the early part of 1958 the goals set for these were relatively modest. Maanshan in Anhwei, for example, was originally scheduled to produce 600,000 tons of steel by 1960, but in June 1958 came the startling news that, when the Ministry of Metallurgy handed over the money, 'the workers and management on their own initiative worked out ways of using

[1] W. W. Rostow *et alii*, *The Prospects for Communist China* (Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1954), pp. 239-40, who estimate the outlay required as being only U.S. $160 m. in terms of 1952 U.S. investment costs.

[2] Chang Chien-yuan, 'China's Five Big Iron and Steel Bases', *Hong Kong Ta-Kung Pao*, 8 June, 1958 (SCMP, No. 1805, p. 12)

the same funds to build not a medium-sized but a large-scale plant capable of producing one to one and a half million tons of steel'. Apparently such miracles are not uncommon under Communism, for Shanghai, which produced only 480,000 tons of steel in 1957, will, by methods not yet revealed, be producing 1.6 m. tons by the end of this year. It is clear that the latest production-targets for the medium steel plants should be viewed with a great deal of scepticism.

What, then, will China's steel capacity be within the next few years? Sufficient evidence has been presented to show that the 1958 claims should be heavily discounted and the goals for this year viewed with considerable reserve. Indeed, a Brazilian journalist who was afforded the rare opportunity of visiting various steel plants and who afterwards discussed his findings with Swedish steel experts afforded similar privileges, found that the Shanghai Steel Plant No. 2 was producing 200,000 tons of steel annually as against a claimed million, while the Canton Steel Plant was producing only one tenth of its claimed annual 500,000. As this commentator stresses: 'We get the Chinese figures on production. We take off 25, 30 per cent, sometimes 50 per cent. But we can't believe that sometimes one must take off 99 per cent'.[1]

The safer course would be to base estimates on the claimed production figures for 1957. We know from the Communist press that Liaoning in that year accounted for 60 per cent of total steel production. Hence Liaoning must produce something in the order of 3.2 m. tons annually. But it is likely that this figure refers to ingot-steel production, and even in the most efficient American plants some 25 per cent in weight of the ingot becomes scrap in the rolling mill through shearing and cropping operations. Further, as some of the high-level planners have been stressing since last December, steel rolling capacity is lagging far behind actual ingot-steel production.[2]

It is therefore unlikely that, even allowing for elimination of the steel rolling bottleneck, Liaoning will greatly exceed the 3 m. mark in finished steel in the course of the next few years, a period during which Paotow and Wuhan will also come into full operation. A favourable estimate would put the combined production of these three centres somewhere in the region of 7 m. tons of finished steel. What the contribution of the 18 provincial medium plants will be cannot be guessed with any degree of certainty. But if they can carry the country's total finished steel production to the 10 m. mark they will have done exceedingly well.

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[1] Louis Wiznitzer 'I saw Red China from the Inside', *U.S. News and World Report*, 15 June, 1959, p. 70.

[2] e.g. Vice-Premier Li Fu-chun in a speech to a Conference of Iron and Steel Workers· NCNA-Chinese, Peking, 16 March, 1959 (SCMP, No. 1981, p. 6)

The short-term outlook for the Chinese steel industry is therefore bright enough. Can the same be said of long-term prospects? To this all-important question the answer is a gloomy one, and that for one main reason: the quality, quantity and geographical distribution of China's metallurgical coal and iron ore resources.

In so far as quantity of coal resources is concerned China has been singularly blessed by nature. With reserves of at least a quarter of a trillion tons China ranks fourth in place among the great coal-producing nations of the world.[1] But although there is coal in every province, three quarters of the reserves are concentrated in the Shansi-Shensi coalfields. This in itself is a good thing, for concentration makes for economy of exploitation. But the primitive state of Chinese communications, the mountainous nature of the region and the concentration of the area's population into two river-valleys (the Wei and Fen Ho) have traditionally discouraged attempts to exploit the Shansi-Shensi coalfields on an extensive basis.[2] The Communists have already tried their hand by building up Tatung (Shansi) as the most important coal centre of the area. But the target for this centre was only 6.45 million in 1957. And, above all, there has been no indication that the Shansi-Shensi coalfields have sizeable reserves of coal which, being free from ash and sulphur, will make satisfactory metallurgical coke.[3]

Shying away from the immensely expensive task of developing the remote and inaccessible Shansi-Shensi coalfields the Communists have preferred to follow the trail blazed by the cost-conscious Japanese and the West during the period of China's treaty-tutelage. Coal production has developed in the more accessible areas, notably the coastal provinces of Liaoning, Hopei and Shantung. In these latter areas the three leading mines are the great open-face mines of Fushun and Fusin (Liaoning) and the Kailan Administration (north of Tientsin in Hopei). And yet, taking 1957 as a reliable statistical year, these three mines were scheduled to contribute only 27.5 m. tons out of a projected national total of 112.98 m. China's major coal mines, in fact, contribute only one third towards national output,[4] and this dispersal of colleries is one of the major headaches of the economic planners. What is even worse, only some of the leading mines yield good metallurgical coke. The coals of Fushun and Fusin, for example, can be utilized by nearby

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[1] The U.S. has 3½, the Soviet Union over 1½ and Canada 1 trillion tons of coal reserves. George B. Cressey, *Asia's Lands and Peoples: A Geography of One-Third the Earth and Two-Thirds Its People* (New York, 1951), p. 79

[2] Population density in these two valleys is 400 per square mile, a low figure by Chinese standards. For the uplands the figure is a sparse 50. Theodore Shabad, *China's Changing Map: A Political and Economic Geography of the Chinese People's Republic* (New York, 1956), p. 199

[3] Shansi's target for this year is 46 m. tons of coal. But coke output is well below the 5 m. mark according to NCNA-English, Taiyuan, 22 March, 1959

[4] NCNA-Chinese, Peking, 6 July, 1957 (SCMP, No. 1573, p. 29)

Anshan only if mixed in suitable proportions with the high-grade coking coal of Penki.[1]

As has emerged clearly in the Chinese Communist press in the past year, this shortage of concentrated coking-coal deposits is causing no little concern. The transportation problems involved in bringing good-quality coking coal from scattered mines to the major steel centres will become increasingly acute. Liaoning, being already served by a relatively dense railroad network, will experience less trouble in that regard, but Wuhan and Paotow will apparently have to rely on supplies hauled over long distances. Wuhan is already having to rely on coking coal from Liaoning[2], and the freight-haul here is in excess of 1,000 miles. And complicating the problem even more is the prior necessity of erecting coal dressing plants at the new coking coal centres. It is only this year that eight of such plants will come into operation. They are expensive and take 1½ to 2 years to build.[3]

Even less encouraging is the iron ore picture. In quantity, reserves are extremely modest for a country of the size and population of China. In their more exuberant moments the Communists claim reserves of 100 thousand million, but the Peking *People's Daily* is closer to the truth in setting a figure of 5.6 thousand million.[4] Even this latter figure must be viewed with some scepticism, for doubts must be entertained as to the technical competence of the thousands of amateur surveyors who reported their estimates from all over the country. As the Vice-Minister of Geology has confessed :

> We have not yet been able to meet fully the drilling and surveying requirements expected from us. We see that the general exploration and survey work is quite difficult, that our equipment and cadres are not sufficient and that there are still many mistakes and faults in our work . . . The quality of our work in some areas is not high enough. Our technical level is yet low . . . It will take a relatively long period of hard work before we can expect our geological level to reach the world level.[5]

Estimates of China's ore resources have fluctuated since the first scientific geological survey of the country was undertaken in the 1870's by the noted German geologist, Baron von Richthofen. This scientist's letters to the Shanghai Chamber of Commerce gave rise, for the first time, to the notion that China possessed unlimited coal and iron ore resources. His conclusions were based on observations made in coal-rich Shansi, a province which had numerous scattered iron-ore deposits.

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[1] Shabad, p. 218
[2] NCNA-English, Shenyang, 23 August, 1958, (SCMP no. 1923, p. 16)
[3] NCNA-English, Peking, 8 April, 1959, (SCMP no. 1992, p. 7)
[4] Peking JMJP editorial of 8 August, 1958 (SCMP no. 1836, p. 9)
[5] Liu Ching-fan, " Great Achievements in Geological Work ' (written statement to National People's Congress on 12 July, 1957) (SCMP, no. 1586, p. 14)

But the optimism engendered by Richthofen did not last long. Individual surveys made by Western and Japanese geologists soon disclosed that many of China's admittedly numerous iron ore deposits were too small and too dispersed for economical, large-scale exploitation.

The climax of pessimism was reached with the publication, in the early 1920's, of the results of a nation-wide geological survey conducted under the direction of the well-known Swedish geologist, Tegengren.[1] In his opinion China's iron ore reserves totalled only 950 m. tons.

It is very likely that Tegengren was unduly conservative. The Kuomintang geologists, who were themselves extremely cautious, put the country's proven and estimated iron ore reserves at the considerably higher figure of 2.1 thousand million,[2] an estimate accepted by the noted geographer, Cressey.[3]

The Tegengren survey, though deficient in one respect, is valuable in another, for it indicates the areas where large-scale exploitation of ore resources is possible. Excluding such Border regions as Inner Mongolia and Sinkiang, Tegengren found three such areas. One was the Archean (low-grade, averaging 34 per cent iron-content) group stretching in a 350 mile arc from the Peking area through South Manchuria to the Korean border. The ore-tonnage in this area he reckoned to be the largest in the country. He found that the second group of concentrated deposits to be in Suanhwa (northwest of Peking). These were richer in quality (average, 55 per cent Fe) but considerably less in quantity. He located the third group in the Yangtse Valley. These he found high in quality (55 per cent Fe), accessible by waterborne transportation but modest in quantity. It is significant that, with the exception of Paotow in Inner Mongolia, an area not explored by Tegengren, the geographical distribution of the modern Chinese steel industry has conformed to the ore pattern delineated by Tegengren. Wuhan, in particular, is but some 50 miles from the iron-mines of Tayeh, pinpointed by him as the single most important (though modest) deposit in the Yangtse Valley.

A further important consideration raised by Tegengren is the overall quality of China's iron ores. The average iron-content of the larger deposits is a lean one third. Hence, even if the Communist claim to reserves of 5.6 thousand million tons were to be accepted, the resulting iron tonnage would be only in the order of 1.8 thousand million. Current U.S. steel capacity (as distinguished from actual production) is some 140 million tons. The Chinese iron ore reserves could therefore be consumed by the Americans within 13 years.

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[1] F. R. Tegengren ' Iron Ores and Iron Industry of China ', *Memoirs*, Part II, Geological Survey of China, Peking, 1923–24

[2] *China Handbook* 1937–45 (New York, 1947), p. 391

[3] Cressey, p. 281

As Tegengren commented thirty-five years ago, in regard to his own estimates,

> China's iron ore resources must be termed very modest or even scant, when her potentialities for industrial development are taken into consideration . . . The total quantity of iron ore (both actual and potential) represented by the figures above would be consumed by the iron industry of the United States within less than nine years.[1]

Cressy has forecast that 'the shortage of iron will be serious before many decades' and has pessimistically stated: 'Conspicuous centers of heavy industry will assuredly develop, but in total production they cannot compare with the major powers'.[2]

As if all of this were not bad enough, China's metallurgical planners have to take into consideration another headache. Because of their generally low iron content the ores require beneficiation (e.g. the magnetic process which will yield a concentrate of 65 per cent) before they can be used in the blast furnace. And this costs a lot of money. Indeed, because of the high cost of utilizing low-grade iron ores the Chinese steel industry cannot be justified on economic grounds. The Japanese found that heavy subsidies were required for the operation of Anshan and Penki. But they were willing, out of strategic considerations, to pay the price.[3]

The Chinese Communists are in the same position. They too can have their steel—at a price. But, as the experience of the Soviet Union teaches, there is a limit to the extent to which costs can be ignored even in a socialist economy. For, having defied the capitalistic laws of economics by building up the famous Magnitogorsk-Kuzbass combine which involves shuttling iron ore and coal to and fro over 1,500 miles of railroad, 'the Soviets have been trying desperately to break it up again'.[4] Chastened by this and other experiences the Soviet metallurgical economists have now conceded that the productive capacity of a steel plant must be so adjusted to nearby raw materials as to guarantee a life-expectancy of at least twenty-five years.[5] There are some grounds for suspecting that the Chinese planners did not heed this lesson when they began to instal mammoth blast furnaces at Wuhan.

10 August 1959

Postscript

The doctrinaire faction has at last capitulated on the steel front. In a momentous communique dated 26 August, the Central Committee

[1] Tegengren, p. 293
[2] Cressey, p. 83
[3] David N. Rowe, *China Among the Powers* (New York, 1945), p. 66
[4] M. Gardner Clark, *The Economics of Soviet Steel* (Harvard Russian Research Center Studies, No. 25; Cambridge, Mass., 1956), p. 178
[5] Clark, p. 83

has now ' suggested ' that ' production of steel by local, simple methods be determined in the future by the local authorities in accordance with local conditions and for local use ; it will no longer be included in the State Plan '.

The face-saving reason given for this major policy-reversal is that there now exists ' a certain degree of shortage of labour for agricultural production this year '. It is, of course, quite true that the iron-smelting campaign involved an immense squandering of manpower and resources and that consequently, as the communique confesses, ' the labour power allocated for the bumper Autumn harvest [last year] was inadequate, with the result that reaping, threshing and storing were all done in a somewhat hurried manner '. But the labour-supply problem is neither the only nor the chief reason for the inglorious and abrupt termination of the iron-smelting campaign. The overriding factor was the technological absurdity of the venture.

In a second, though less important, respect the doctrinaire group has also conceded defeat. The Central Committee announcement now admits that last year's steel production figures were misleading and has revised downwards the target for this year. Of the 11.08 million tons of steel produced last year, we now learn, 3.08 million (a suspiciously rounded out figure) were " made by local, simple methods ' and were capable only of meeting ' the requirements of rural areas '. This would leave a net 8 million tons as the 1958 output of modern, industrial steel. But, as the evidence adduced in the preceding paragraphs tends to show, even this ' revised ' figure must be viewed with a great deal of scepticism. Furthermore, the figure most likely refers to ingot steel production and requires to be related to an inferior steel rolling capacity.

The revised steel target for this year is 12 million tons. It supersedes the originally envisaged goal of 18 million tons. Yet even this more modest figure is, for reasons already outlined, not at all credible and will constitute an attainable objective only after the lapse of several more years.

2 September, 1959

The Meaning Doesn't Matter ?

SOME REFLECTIONS ON MODERN ABSTRACT PAINTING

by CYRIL BARRETT

ABOUT a year ago the *New Yorker* had a cartoon of two men studying, in puzzled concentration, a large abstract picture ; one of them makes the tentative suggestion : ' Maybe he is trying *not* to say something '. There, by implication and in the fewest possible words, we have the problem of modern abstract art.

For over fifty years the public has watched the successive revolutions in painting with patient bewilderment. However grotesque and distorted the figures may have been, they were always recognizable ; a hand or an eye might have been out of place but it still bore some resemblance to the human organ. Now there is not even that : a picture resembles nothing at all. You can walk through room after room at any international exhibition or turn over the plates in a recent book on contemporary art (*Art Since, 1945*, published last winter by Thames and Hudson is a good example) hardly encountering a recognizable form in all the desert of sheer paint.

Abstract painting is not new. When exactly the first modern abstract was painted is a disputed question ; it was certainly no later than 1910. But since the end of the war it has become dominant ; it can no longer be dismissed as a harmless eccentricity. Its appearance on such a scale has raised in an acute form the question of meaning in art. Can a painting which represents nothing that is recognizable have meaning ? If so, what is that meaning ? If not, what right has it to be called art ?

But first, it might be best to clarify the notion of abstract art and see how it came into existence. In doing this some answers to these questions may suggest themselves.

* * *

A certain amount of confusion in the use of the word ' abstract ' has arisen. There are paintings in which the resemblance to natural forms is very slight and others where these forms have been so distorted and strangely composed that the overall effect bears little or no resemblance to anything met with in normal visual experience. These are often legitimately called ' abstract '. They are also called ' semi-abstract ', and for the purposes of this article this is the term which will be used. The word ' abstract ' (without addition, or for greater clarity, ' pure abstract ') will be reserved for those paintings which bear

no resemblance whatsoever to any form or object that we might encounter in ordinary visual experience, and where no resemblance is intended on the part of the painter. This may not be a very perfect definition (what definition in the language of art criticism ever is?) but it is hoped that in the course of the article its meaning will be made clearer.

Various attempts have been made to improve the terminology but none has been satisfactory. Some painters (Van Doesburg, Arp and Kandinsky among others) objected to the word abstract on the grounds that it suggested a retreat from concrete visual reality into the order of ideas and abstractions, whereas nothing could be more down to earth than pictures composed of the very stuff of painting : colour, shape, line and the texture of the materials. These artists began to speak of *concrete* art, thus adding delightfully to the confusion. Another term, *non-objective,* is hardly less confusing. The artists who use it wish to signify that their paintings are not intended to represent natural objects ; but they do not wish to suggest that they lack objectivity. They would probably maintain that they are all the more objective because the object for them is the work itself. Fortunately no one has yet used the word ' objective ' as a synonym for abstract art. There is one term which is useful, though it too has its disadvantages : it is *non-figurative,* where figurative can be taken to mean recognizable form.

If these rather unsuccessful attempts to grapple with terminology have left the impression that where names are concerned artists are a fickle lot, they will not have been entirely in vain. The utmost caution must therefore be observed in dealing with the titles of pictures suspected of being abstract. While an artist's title (if it is really his own) should never be ignored, since it may give a clue to the appreciation of the picture, it would be unwise to conclude that all pictures entitled ' Composition ' or ' Painting ' are abstract or that a picture called ' Martha ' will have a human face lurking in a mass of pigment.

An art form which is not committed to representing natural forms is capable of unlimited variety. It is strange and significant that modern abstract art has not the variety that one might expect. It is enormously varied nonetheless, and any attempt to classify it is futile. But in order to talk about it at all, it has to be rounded up into some broad divisions. Andrew Carnduff Ritchie in his introduction to the catalogue of the first exhibition of American Abstract Art in the Museum of Modern Art, New York, in 1951, divided abstract art into five main divisions : geometric (pure), architectural and mechanical geometric, geometric (natural), expressionistic geometric and expressionistic biomorphic. At one end you have pure geometrical and at the other the fluid, amorphous or, as he calls it, biomorphous expressionism ; all the rest is a combination of both. This is about as near as you can come

to classification without falling into absurdity ; it is based, as the distinction between classical and romantic is based, on two opposite elements in man himself, the rational and the emotional. For those who want greater precision the Ritchie classification can be recommended, but for our present purposes it will be sufficient to reduce abstract art into two groups, the geometrical and the amorphous to which Patrick Heron has given the happy titles 'hard' abstract and 'soft' abstract.

' Hard ' abstract, or, as the French call it *abstraction froide* (cold abstraction), covers all abstract paintings in which lines and outlines are firm and clear, either pure geometrical shapes (triangles, squares, circles) or combinations of them. ' Soft' abstract covers all other kinds of abstract painting ; it is free, without clear outlines, ' atmospheric, spacial, sensuous and organic '.

There are no schools or movements in abstract art in quite the same sense as one speaks of the Cubists or Impressionists, for instance, but certain groups of artists have given themselves names which in some way express their common purpose. Three of these groups are closely related. They all appeared about the same time, and they can all be described as ' hard ' abstractionists. The earliest and most extreme ' doctrine '—it can hardly be called a group, since besides its founder, the Russian painter, Malevich, it claims no one of distinction—is *Suprematism.* According to Malevich, art is a sort of ingredient which can be detected by sensibility and is to be found in an impure state in the world and in art. The Suprematist isolates it and presents it in its purity (' Suprematism is the supremacy of pure sensibility') in the form of a square or rectangle or circle. Malevich's first suprematist work was a simple black square in pencil on a white ground (1913) ; his most remarkable was a white square on a white ground (1919). In 1917 a group with a theory similar to Suprematism appeared, also in Russia ; these were the *Constructivists.* A constructivist work is geometrical in design but made up (constructed) from a variety of materials, glass, wire, etc., in the manner of a *collage ;* it lies somewhere between a picture and a piece of sculpture. Constructivism had a wide influence outside the group (Tatlin, Lissitzky and the brothers Pevsner and Gabo) especially in architecture, engineering and industrial design. Lastly, there is the group called the *Neo-Plasticists* or the *De Stijl* group (after the name of their periodical), which has also profoundly influenced modern architecture. Le Corbusier, Mies van der Rohe, Gropius, and Frank Lloyd Wright were among those associated with neo-plasticism. It was founded in Holland in 1917 by Mondrian and Van Doesburg, and its aims were the clearest and most uncompromising : to abstract from all natural form and colour, reducing all to straight vertical and horizontal lines and primary colours (red, yellow and blue) in order to fulfil the modern desire for a beauty which is ' cosmic and universal '.

The 'soft' abstracts, being by nature amorphous, are not the property of any one group. Before the war the painters who indulged in this type of abstraction were called *Abstract Expressionists* because they belonged to the abstract branch of German Expressionism, and this name is still used today to describe 'soft' abstractionists. But since the war, painters in France and the United States have taken to calling themselves, or have been called, *Tachists* and *Action Painters* respectively. The word *tachisme* is taken from the method of applying paint in spots, splashes and daubs. The name 'Action Painting' refers to theory that it is only the act or action of artistic creation which matters, not the 'subject' painted. But since the technique of the Action Painter is the same as that of the Tachist, and they share the same theory (though the Action Painter is less rigidly abstract), the names are practically synonymous.

To understand the work of these various groups, their aims and theories, it might be best to take two or three of the more important painters and study their development. The Dutch painter, Piet Mondrian, is perhaps the best to start with. He was one of the first and his development from figurative painting to pure abstraction has been the most consistent.

In 1909 Mondrian went to the village of Domburg on the Isle of Walcheren to paint the local scenes, the seascape, the lighthouse, the church, the windmill. What interested him in these scenes was the opposition of forces and the rhythm that resulted from them : the waves raised by the counteraction of wind and sea-swell ; the undulations, ripples and gougings of the resisting sand under the action of wind and sea ; the vertical thrust of the church steeple rising through the clouds or through the branches of surrounding trees. These forces he represented by long sweeping brush strokes broken by blocks of paint.

Then he began to paint an appletree, its bare branches either crushed and lost in a great expanse of dark blue sky or asserting themselves against it and stretching outwards in triumphant arcs. In course of time the branches became mere curved lines, and the spaces between became solid volumes, static forms which seem to 'brace' themselves against the expanding curvilinear movement. The opposition of forces had become more abstract ; the curved lines less and less recognizable as the trunk and branches of a tree. He continued his experiments in abstraction by applying it to still-life. (These still-life pieces are distinguished by the presence of a large gingerpot.) This gave him an opportunity to make the opposition of forces more exact : the concentric curves and the opposing solid volumes were replaced by the vertical and horizontal lines of rectilinear objects which oppose each other directly, head-on as it were, and not with a glancing blow.

The process of abstraction was greatly accelerated by a visit to Paris at the end of 1911. While he admired the work of Picasso and Braque and the other Cubists and was stimulated by it, he realized that he had independently gone further along the road of abstraction. The Cubists suggested the line along which progress could be made but they did not follow it. ' Cubism did not accept the logical consequence of its own discoveries ; it was not developing abstraction towards its ultimate goal.' Why this was so shall appear presently. Mondrian was left to go forward alone. In 1913 he produced his first purely abstract painting, a composition of loosely knit rectangles in subdued colours, fading towards the edges into a network of intersecting verticals and horizontals.

Then the war broke out and Mondrian, who had returned to Holland to visit his father, was cut off from Paris for five years. He turned again to the sea and the broad horizon, the sky and stars, and set out to paint the vastness and expansion and repose and unity of nature ; what he called ' pure reality '. ' To create unity, art has to follow not nature's aspect but what nature really is.' This meant reducing natural forms to the ' constant element of form ' (geometrical figure) and natural colour to primary red, blue and yellow. The expanse of sea and sand and branches became horizontals and the upward thrust of tower and tree-trunk was conveyed by verticals. At first these forces were ' represented ' by little crosses which make the eye leap about the canvas and give the effect of twinkling. But they were too restless and were replaced for a time by rectangles of different colours on a neutral background. Finally the background itself disappeared, the coloured rectangles came together, the intersecting black lines returned (no longer as crosses, but reaching from side to side of the picture) and the canvas was covered with a grid of energetic, upward thrusting vertical, and restful, expansive horizontal lines with the rectangular spaces between them either coloured in primaries or left a neutral black, white or grey. The process of abstraction was complete.

Mondrian had a social as well as artistic purpose in his experiments. He believed that through universal harmony and unity in art he could bring about the same condition in man. Abstract painting had reduced nature to its simplest and most universal forms (the forms of geometry) and to its purest colours and had set up an exact and harmonious relationship between them. It had also brought painting into line with architecture, and through architecture the whole environment of human living could be influenced. This may sound optimistic but it has a respectable ancestry. Plato in the *Philebus* writes : 'I do not now intend by beauty of shapes what most people would expect, such as that of living creatures or pictures, but . . . straight lines and curves and the surfaces or solid forms produced out of these by lathes and rulers and

squares . . . These things are not beautiful relatively, like other things, but always and naturally and absolutely.' (sic)

Mondrian's interest in the conditions of human living is seen in his last works, painted in New York, where he lived from 1940 until his death in 1944. Fascinated by the life of a great city, he brought something of it into his work. From now on the vertical and horizontal lines became more animated ; they were no longer black, but interweaving bands of bright colour carrying the eye along as lanes of traffic do when seen, especially at night, from a high building. They had a new rhythm, too. Mondrian compared it to jazz rhythm and called some of these pictures *Boogie-Woogie.* The steadier horizontal lines and areas of colour were like the varied rhythms of the right hand which intergrated with the persistent left-hand rhythm represented by the upward thrust of the thinner, asymmetrical verticals.[1] Once more it was the opposition of forces and the rhythm resulting from them which brought Mondrian in the end to see that, through abstraction, painting may join hands even with music. He shared this interest in the musical quality of abstract painting with the next abstract painter we are to consider, Wassily Kandinsky.

Kandinsky is generally regarded as the first abstract painter—the claims of his rivals, Ciurlionis and Hölzel, need not be taken too seriously.[2] He came to abstraction in quite a different way from that of Mondrian. Unlike Mondrian, he was not interested in the forces of nature and their effect on the appearance of things. He was not interested in things as such at all. He was a romantic and a Russian. His early work had been occupied with fairy tales and Russian folklore. After a visit to Paris in 1907 he returned to Munich to paint landscapes of mountain scenery around the Bavarian village of Murnau. He was not interested in the structure of those landscapes, the formal relationships of hills and buildings and trees. He was concerned only with the feelings they aroused : his landscapes were romantic. Above all he was interested in the expressive qualities of colour. As time went on colour came to be treated more and more for its own sake and for the mood it evoked and less as a description of the appearance of nature.

Then one evening Kandinsky came into his studio in the twilight and saw what he describes as a ' vision ', ' an indescribably beautiful painting, permeated by an inner glow '. It was one of his own landscapes

[1] For this interpretation I am indebted to David Lewis : *Mondrian,* London, 1957. Mondrian himself has written : ' Boogie Woogie I conceived as homogeneous in intention with mine in painting . . . the destruction of melody which is equivalent to the destruction of natural appearance ; construction through the continuous opposition of pure means—dynamic rhythm '. A fuller, though less exciting, account of Mondrian is given by Michel Seuphor in *Mondrian,* London, 1956. He gives no explanation for some important departures from the normal dating.

[2] Will Grohmann : *Wassily Kandinsky,* London, 1959, p. 83.

but the forms had become blurred in the fading light. 'Now I knew with certainty that the object harms my paintings . . . The ends (and hence also the means) of nature and art differ essentially, organically and by virtue of a universal law.'

Kandinsky did not immediately become an abstract painter. He continued to paint his romantic landscapes. But they began to resemble ever more closely the painting in the 'vision'. He had always been attracted to music, particularly to the hidden and mysterious quality of Wagner's music, and he now began to treat colour as Wagner treated musical chords. The surging masses of colour suggest the rising swell of musical sounds ; there are dark patches full of forboding like deep tones of doom ; energy is generated by discordant contrasts of sulphorous yellow and deep blue-green ; shrill lyrical bursts of pure, bright colours detach themselves from the surrounding gloom ; and in quiet passages of harmoniously blending colours the conflicting elements resolve themselves. Whether it is true, as Walter Pater says, that 'all the arts tend toward the condition of music', it is certainly true of Kandinsky's work. The analogy with music is irresistable.

His progress towards abstraction can best be studied by taking a subject like the church at Murnau and watching the treatment it receives from year to year. At first (*Village Church* 1908) there is a slight diagonal rhythm and the chords of colour are laid on with parallel brushstrokes but they adhere to the forms and all the objects have volume. Then (*Landscape with Tower* 1909) the colours begin to glow 'like illuminated windows at night', the outlines become blurred and objects lose their volume—a hill is weightless like a cloud ; contrasting emotional qualities of colours—warm and cold, heavy and light, bright and dark-predominate. By 1910 the landscape is no longer static : it has been set in motion : the tower leans now to one side, now to the other, bobbing up in a vapour of colour which sometimes suggests a hill or a gable. Finally the whole scene flies apart on wisps and whirls and washes of colour across which a soft trailing outline might suggest a tower or the shoulder of a hill before dissolving into the mists.

Though by 1910 Kandinsky had painted his first abstract he continued to paint these semi-abstract 'landscapes' (Impressions he called them) and even in the pure abstracts of those early years one feels that forms are struggling to take shape. He was in Russia during the war and when in 1921 he returned to Germany, his paintings underwent a change. They were no longer 'soft' abstractions : they had hardened into geometrical shapes and the colours which in the pre-war years had been lyrical now became cold—Kandinsky speaks of the period from 1921 to 1933 as his 'cool' period. In Russia and in the Bauhaus in Germany, where he worked till 1933, he had been in close touch with the Constructivists and, though his latest biographer, Prof. Grohmann,

is inclined to minimize their influence, it cannot be completely disregarded.[1]

This crystallization of his earlier 'free' forms into geometrical shapes has about it something of a natural development. Though the forms are sharper and clearer, they have lost nothing of the explosive dynamism, the centrifugal force of the first abstracts. But gradually the tempo begins to run down and the forms detach themselves from one another and from the background. For a time the canvases are filled with circles or triangles or squares floating in space. Under the influence of Paul Klee these forms sometimes take on a gay and even humorous character, and from 1933 when he had settled in Paris, having been expelled from Nazi Germany, the colours become lyrical once more; during that period they also become more organic (biomorphic in the Ritchie classification). But all the time the forms become more static and are separated from one another, until finally they are divided into clearly defined compartments where they stand like hieroglyphs in some secret alphabet known only to their creator. The development is not quite as smooth as this brief account of it suggests, but the beginnings of each phase are well defined, and it is marked throughout by a disintegration, a splitting assunder of an amorphous, whirling mass into separate elements which in the end become almost figurative and suggest natural forms.

Like Mondrian, Kandinsky was a reformer. He wanted to bring about a change in man and in his way of living. He was disgusted with the materialism of the age and by the way the Impressionists had pandered to it by making the representation of material objects and the effect of light upon them the sole purpose of their art. It was time for a revival of the spirit, and art could assist in this revival by abandoning material objects and by turning instead to the elements of painting, the abstract elements of colour and line and shape and surface texture which, like the spirit, transcend all material objects by their universality. Painting must aspire to the most abstract, and hence the most spiritual of all arts, music.

Kandinsky was religious by temperament rather than by a close adherence to a faith. The religious art of his country, the icons in particular, attracted him strongly. But in his reaction against materialism he fell a victim to the various forms of spiritism, parapsychosis, occultism, orientalism, etc. which were popular in Germany at the beginning of the century. In his anxiety to see the world redeemed from materialism before it went down in ruins he let himself be carried away in an orgy of wishful thinking. He believed that the world was on the 'threshold of the third revelation' and that he himself was already living partly

[1] Grohmann: *op. cit.*, pp. 171 et seq.

in the invisible and hereafter, and he looked forward to the day when the spiritual regeneration would have been so far advanced that ' painters would be able to do without brushes '. In time he modified these ideas.

This belief in a spiritual rebirth was common among artists in the years immediately preceding the 1914 war. They were satisfied that recent discoveries in science had discredited materialism. Kandinsky says that the disintegration of the atom was to him like the disintegration of the whole world. ' I should not have been surprised if a stone had melted in the air and become invisible before my eyes.' He was hardly referring to the operation known as splitting the atom which did not take place until 1919, but already in the closing years of the nineteenth and the opening decade of the present century the electron had been discovered, and the atom bombarded by J. J. Thompson. Rutherford had put forward the theory of the transmutation of elements, Planck's quantum theory and Einstein's theory of the conversion of mass into energy had been enunciated. The distinction between matter and spirit seemed to have blurred and to be about to disappear altogether. At the same time science, far from offering a rational and mechanicist explanation of the universe, was opening up new mysteries every day.

To increase the general mistrust of reason and the loss of belief in the reality of the material universe, the works of the German Romantic philosophers and poets (Fichte, Schelling, Novalis) were coming back into favour and an exhibition of the painters of the movement was held in 1906. In the same year, just before Kandinsky arrived in Paris, Bergson published his *Creative Evolution.* In it is to be found the notion of the creative life-force as a continuous flux, moving towards a state of greater self-awareness (spirituality) ; here too, intuition is praised at the expense of abstract reasoning. Goethe, Wölfflin, Friedmann and Fiedler, writers who emphasized the value of the act of artistic creation for its own sake, were now re-read. They opened up the possibility that artistic form itself and not the material world might be taken as an ' object ' of a painting. In 1907 these ideas were more fully explicitated by Wörringer in his *Abstraktion und Einfuhlung* (Abstraction and Empathy). Abstraction, the striving for the absolute, the unchangeable, the necessary, was, he held, the essence of art. If the reality of the material universe could be called in question, here at least was something to cling to : the absolute and unchangeable and necessary in art, the abstract elements of line and colour and non-figurative forms. There is something of the ivory tower, of escapism, about this aspect of abstract art. This is freely acknowledged by Franz Marc (' Painting shall free me from my fears ') and Paul Klee (' the more horrible the world, the more abstract art becomes '), and it may partly explain the popularity of abstract art in our age, especially after the two wars.

In the same year that he painted his first abstract, 1910, Kandinsky worked out his theory of abstract art in *Uber das Geistige in der Kunst* (variously translated : *The Art of Spiritual Harmony,* M. Sadler, 1914 ; *On the Spiritual in Art,* 1946 ; and *Concerning the Spiritual in Art,* 1947). He looked upon himself as another Moses who finds the world dancing about the golden calf of materialism but to whom nonetheless he brings the solace of wisdom. Besides his general ideas outlined above, he begins an analysis of the abstract elements of painting on the lines of the analysis of music in a theory of harmony. He continued this analysis in later works and it is among the valuable contributions made by abstract artists to our knowledge of art.

Between the wars abstract painting took second place to cubism and surrealism and the various off-shoots of these. At one period (synthetic cubism) Picasso, Braque, Léger and Gris painted, or rather constructed, pictures which at first sight appear abstract but in reality depend for their power precisely on the fact that they still bear some resemblance to natural objects : for a tension is set up between this resemblance and the surface qualities of the picture : the eye is continually passing from one to the other. This type of painting is, in fact, the very opposite of abstract : it begins with abstract elements and builds up an object ; as Juan Gris said : ' Cézanne turned a bottle into a cylinder, but I turn a cylinder into a bottle.' (It is hard to see what Sir Herbert Read means when he says that with synthetic cubism ' the way to abstraction is opened ' when exactly the opposite seems to be the case. But he is probably referring to the use of the cubist *collage.*)

It was the war which opened the way to a general acceptance of abstract art. We are too close to the event to see exactly why this should have happened. Perhaps after the war artists were ready and eager for new things and wanted to make a new start. Of all the movements in modern art, abstraction was the one which had been least exploited and was furthest removed (diametrically opposed) from the traditionally accepted principles of painting. It made the completest break with the past ; it was in every way a new venture, an art of the future. And, of course, there was the element of escape. At any rate, the exhibitions of Mondrian and Kandinsky (both of whom had died in 1944), Arp, Pevsner and van Doesburg which were held in Paris and New York in the immediate post-war years had a profound effect on the younger generation of painters. Of these the one who has won most notoriety on account of his sensational technique is the American, Jackson Pollock, and since that technique is a central feature of contemporary abstract painting he seems the best to take as a third example.

During the twenties Pollock learnt from Thomas Benton to paint the ' American Scene '. In the thirties and early forties he travelled

in Mexico and Europe and came under the influence of Picasso, Miró and the Surrealists. From Picasso and Miró, Sam Hunter tells us, he learnt that ' abstraction could be more than a language of pure relation and could embody its creator's fancies, disquiet and passion '. From the Surrealists he learnt the importance of the ' accidental ' in painting. The Surrealists believed that it is not only what is seen that is real but also the unseen and unconscious processes of thought, and that these are manifested when the mind is free from the control of reason and allowed to form chance or accidental associations as it does in dreams. (' Beautiful as the chance encounter of a sewing machine and an umbrella on an operating table.'—Comte de Lautréamont) Though Pollock adopted a little of their ' dream ' imagery, it was their use of automatic techniques, especially automatic writing (indulged in more by Surrealist poets than painters) which left the most lasting impression on his work.

In 1946 he abandoned recognizable imagery altogether and let his paintings ' create their own imagery '. He still regarded the source of his paintings as the unconscious and believed that they revealed something of the processes which went on in his imagination in the very moment of artistic creation, but his conscious attention was concentrated on the expressive quality of paint and he relied, to quote Sam Hunter again, on ' the chance effects of pigmentation, harmonious or disruptive, to give vitality and tension ' to his work. In order to enrich the texture of his surfaces he resorted to unusual materials : Duro enamel, aluminium paint, house-paint, sand, glass. To give freer play to his paint he devised a novel technique which has given hostile critics their apparent justification for condemning abstract art out of hand. It is known as the ' drip ' or ' dribble ' technique. The artist places his canvas on the floor and, with a brush or stick heavily loaded, allows a stream of paint to flow over it forming arabesques of colour. The technique, adopted in 1947 was abandoned in 1952 when he returned to brush and tube pigments. In 1954 he gave up painting and in 1956 he was killed in a car accident.

There was one short period (1950–51) when Pollock restricted himself to the use of black paint poured on unprimed canvas and allowed the vestiges of recognizable images to emerge. Apart from this use of imagery, Pollock, in Sam Hunter's rather grandiloquent phrase might be said to have expressed ' the effort of dynamic matter to overcome chaos and attain determinate form '. There is something monumental and architectonic about Pollock's painting, but over and above that there is the struggle to impose order on unruly material and maintain it. At first his paintings ' seem to heave and bulge, as if some invisible beast trapped within their depth were seeking desperately to free itself '. Then there is a period of almost classical calm and poise in the restrained and sparing use of the drip technique. Finally, in his last period, there

is a 'Herculean assertion of order'; 'order here is imposed as an abrupt and violent display of will power to subdue the area of hectic pigment.'[1]

It is not immediately evident how a technique such as Pollock's (and it is only an extreme example of the techniques used by all Tachist and Action Painters) can impose order on anything. Of its nature it is a technique of chance. That is true, but it must not be forgotten that there is an element of chance in every technique which handles a fluid substance like paint. This is notoriously true of watercolours. It is part of the painter's skill to be able to control the flow of paint and make use of accidents which may occur. In fact the more liberty the painter can give his medium the more fresh and vital will be his painting. The Tachist, of course, goes further: he invites accidents. He is in a better position to do this since he is not committed to reproducing the appearance of natural forms. In fact he is almost obliged to do it in order to stimulate his imagination. In this he is not doing anything new. Leonardo da Vinci in his *Trattato della Pittura* (63) writes: 'You should look at certain walls stained with damp or at stones of uneven colour . . . the embers of the fire, or clouds, or mud, or other similar objects from which you will find most admirable ideas . . . because from a confusion of shapes the spirit is quickened to new inventions'. In the eighteenth century Leonardo's idea was applied by Alexander Cozens who used blots or blobs of ink or paint to stimulate his imagination. He wrote a treatise on his blot technique ('Almost as full of systems as the universe'—Beckford) and was known as the 'Blotmaster of the Town'. In writing of his own technique Pollock says: 'I approach painting the same way as I approach drawing, with no previous sketches . . . It is only after a sort of "get acquainted" period that I see what I have been about . . . The painting has a life of its own. I try to let it come through'.

The fact that a painter pours his paint from a height or even throws it at the canvas does not necessarily imply that he has no control over the composition. The accident is not accidental to the finished work. Desirable painterly effects are obtained by this method which could not be produced in any other way: Pollock's continuous flowing line, for example. Far from allowing the materials to get out of control, this technique demands the utmost concentration. But the control exercised is not as conscious as in other techniques. The speed at which the materials have to be handled calls for a good deal of automatic control—the sort of control that sees us safely through a sudden crisis on the roads. 'Accident-inviting techniques in art evade our slow conscious attention, stimulate instead split-second automatic reactions

[1] Laurence Alloway in *The Listener*, Vol. LX, p. 888.

and so bring about the increased participation of the unconscious mind as a whole'. (Dr Anton Ebrenzweig)

In so far as they are interested in anything more than covering their canvases with rich surfaces of paint, the Tachists and Action Painters are mainly concerned about this participation of the unconscious. Pollock, to quote Hunter once more, 'made painting a vehicle of intense feeling, using abstraction to reach a new depth in himself'. Some painters, under the influence of oriental mysticism, especially of Zen Buddhism, use the technique as a means of reaching a mystical state (the brushstroke is the 'symbol of the spirit').[1] Be that as it may, the fact remains that the tachist technique does reveal something of our hidden self. Every technique does that to some extent. 'All art', as Sir Herbert Read has said, 'is in a sense an unconscious self-betrayal, but it is not necessarily awareness of the self betrayed'. (*Icon and Idea*, p. 111) For a very long time the self-betrayal has become more and more conscious. The artists and poets anticipated the philosophers and psychologists in the exploration of the subjective and subconscious, and they have provided much of the source-material on which the latter have worked. Subjectivity has shown itself in a freer handling of material—you have only to compare the portraits by Leonardo, Dürer, Rembrandt, Friedrich, van Gogh, Kokoschka and Klee (*Icon and Idea* Pl. 66–69) to see this. Tachism, the almost completely free use of materials, is at the end of a long line of development.

The reason why the subjective is more consciously revealed by freely handled materials is because more scope is given to involuntary bodily movement. Self-expression is made most directly by bodily gesture and movement. Sadness is expressed by a certain listlessness and lack of animation of face, body and limbs. These involuntary movements can be extended into the descriptive gestures of the actor, orator or dancer. Drawing, painting and modelling belong fundamentally to this order of bodily movement. This aspect is not often considered but it is always there—the 'crude' scribbles of children are as much gestures as they are immature attempts to represent a cat or a lawn-mower. How far handwriting and signatures are clues to character is disputed but it cannot be denied that a person gives himself away as much by his hasty scribbles as in the firmness or hesitancy or suavity of his movements. It is interesting to compare the signatures of artists with their brush-

[1] Zen Buddhism is described as a direct intuition of Reality, transcending reason and understanding and giving knowledge which cannot be communicated rationally—to the unenlightened it is nonsense. Many techniques have been devised to help men make the leap from rational thinking to intuitive knowing. Among these techniques might be included the landscape paintings and flower pictures of Chinese and Japanese Zen artists, where man intuits the 'grandeur' vastness and inexhaustibility of nature' which is expressed and also the 'sensitiveness and mystic impenetrability of the soul' which is reflected in nature. (Cf. D. T. Sukuki : *Essays in Zen Buddhism* and *Zen Buddhism and its Influence*.) It is not difficult to see that tachism might be regarded as a technique to help the artist transcend rational thought.

strokes and other evidence of their manipulation of material. In fact a study of the brushwork of one of the masters is often an insight into his feeling for the object he has painted and a key to the rhythm of the whole picture ; it should never be omitted if a full appreciation of his work is desired, not merely for the sake of obtaining direct personal contact with the painter but for better understanding of the work itself. Some painters, Turner after 1840 is perhaps the earliest, and after him the Impressionists, particularly Monet, make this kind of study the predominant part of an appreciation of their work, and in this they are said to be the forerunners of Tachism, but all great painters have tended towards the end of their life to rely on the sheer ' handling ' of materials, whether paint or unhewn stone or sound, to convey, as Titian did in the *Christ crowned with Thorns* (Munich) or Beethoven in the last quartets, their deepest emotions. If therefore the personal, self-revealing element in painting is to become the objective sought after and, as it were, the subject matter of the work there is no other way that this can be done than by a technique like that of Tachism. Surrealism falls between two stools. Either the dream-images are genuine, in which case they come together by chance association and do not form an artistic composition, or else they have been submitted to some kind of artistic composition and are therefore not the result of chance association. As it happens they are usually intellectually contrived, stock symbols (the champagne glass and slipper) from the psychiatrist's notebook. But tachist technique is a normal artistic activity in which the personal and unconscious elements are allowed to predominate but a measure of conscious artistic control is maintained, though natural images are not allowed to develop.

But a problem now arises. Granted that a tachist work is a true revelation of the personality, the hidden and unconscious self, and a most direct expression of it, how is it to be understood ? Presumably the artist himself has had some emotional experience of which the work is in some way a concomitant, product or symbol. Presumably a psychiatrist or graphologist would be able to interpret it. (Are these altogether legitimate presumptions ?) But what of the rest of us ? What are we to make of it all ? There is the problem of communication, of a common ground. We can interpret bodily gestures partly from common experience, partly from a quality in the gesture which corresponds to certain reactions produced within us. Is there any way of reading these tachist gestures ? Have they any meaning at all ?

(to be continued)

The Art of Biography

by MARY PURCELL

IN his book, *The Mirror in the Roadway*, Frank O'Connor made the point that the nineteenth century novel was a great *popular* art shared by the whole community. What the Greek drama was to the Athenians so the works of Dickens, Scott, Thackeray and Jane Austen were to the English-speaking peoples of their time. The reading and enjoyment of these great novelists was not the pastime of any particular class, nor the province of an exclusive literary coterie or an intellectual *élite*. It was common to all.

As with novels then, so now with biography. The improved literary and scientific standards of biographical writing may be one reason for its ever-increasing popularity ; another may be found in the current interest in psychology. The vogue for biographies which show the workings of the subject's mind came in just after World War I, and since then biographers have had to reckon with this demand of the reading public for the presentation of human personality and experience as the complex, uneven, changing thing it is.

Biography is to be found in the epics and sagas of every people. Three thousand years before the Christian era the Egyptians were inscribing crude accounts of dead pharaohs on stone tablets which were interred with the remains. Though written in the first person these notices were biographical rather than autobiographical. Georg Misch, in *A History of Autobiography in Antiquity*, comments on their uniformity and suggests that they were prepared during the subject's lifetime and had to be approved by him as worthy of finding a place in his tomb. The great man was shown only at the summit of his career, his achievements, especially his military exploits, being highly praised, his faults and failures overlooked. Misch writes :

> Self-glorification has never since appeared with such naïveté . . . Some confront us with immoderate, even brutally vigorous self-glorification, to a degree unique in history.

The result was, in the case of these stony obituaries, flat, distorted and unrealistic images of the monarchs they commemorated. By 2000 B.C., Egypt's Feudal Age, we find papyrus rolls in the tombs and the library-jars of noblemen, citing the deeds by which they wished to be remembered. One of these ran :

> There was no citizen's daughter whom I misused ; no widow whom I oppressed ; no peasant whom I evicted ; no shepherd whom I expelled

> . . . Among my people none went wretched, no one went hungry in my time . . . In time of famine I ploughed all the fields of the Oryx (his estate) . . . preserving its people alive and furnishing food for all. I gave to the widow as to the woman who had a husband ; in my giving I did not exalt the great above the lowly in any way.

Here may be seen a departure from earlier records of individual life ; there is regard for the sufferings of the poor, with perhaps an intended indictment of higher rulers who were unjust and cruel to their subjects.

Fourteen centuries before the coming of Christ, the Assyrians and Babylonians were recording, also in the first person and in the conventional form used by the Egyptians for the earlier pharaohs, the deeds and careers of their kings. Most of these notices reek of blood and smoke, of war and conquest, particularly in the case of the Assyrians, who were tigers in their ferocity and cruelty. Yet sometimes behind the wild boasts and empty threats etched on baked brick tablets or chiselled on stone, there is a suggestion of lurking, primeval fears. Even kings quailed at the thought of riding forth alone to a combat where no war-chariots might follow, no archers or javelin-throwers come. Shelley sums up just such an epitaph in his lines :

> My name is Ozymandias, king of kings ;
> Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair !

A less naïve approach shows in the accounts the Persians preserved of the lives of their great men. Inscriptions on monuments and in parchment had by this time, four to five centuries before Christ, superseded the burial-tablet life-records. On the Behistun cliff, overlooking the road that led from Babylon to the east, a lengthy inscription in cuneiform records the triumphs of Darius the Great over all his foes ; it also shows that bravery and strength were not the only qualities Darius considered worthy of esteem. Besides the conventional : ' I am great Darius, mighty king, king of kings, king of Persia, king of all lands ' there is mention of the monarch's attitude towards others :

> These lands rendered service and tribute to me . . . I cared for him who was friendly to me ; I punished him who opposed me. Ahuramazda gave me aid and dominion.

The attraction of the Greek mind was, in the earlier stages of Greek civilization, for poetry and drama rather than biography. The Greeks saw man not as ' maker of his fate, the captain of his soul ' but as the plaything of the Fates ; ideals interested them more than actual facts ; they preferred to study an individual at the apex of his fame and paid little heed to how or by what stages he arrived at that maturity. Neither

Hippocrates nor Herodotus had much faith in man's ability to overcome the influence of environment. The former attributed the corporeal and mental differences between men of different races and continents to the vagaries of climate. Herodotus quotes King Cyrus (whom he praises for discouraging Persians who wished to migrate to the richer lands of conquered foes) as saying ' Soft countries invariably breed soft men.' The Greeks had such an appreciation of the ideal that the fragments of their biographical writing of this period which have survived, all conformed to a highly-idealized, set pattern. The enconium, the verse-tribute to victorious athletes, had its parallel in the Lives of the period.

Thus Xenophon, writing on Agesilaus, narrates and discusses his subject's patriotism, bravery, filial devotion, restraint and other virtues but ignores the obverse side of the character. Xenophon finished the *Memorabilia*, which purported to be a defence of his friend Socrates, with the words ' I have described him as he was.' But the work was incomplete, with great gaps. Socrates was no character to cast from a uniform idealistic mould that fitted here, bruised there, and finally turned out an image, acceptable in that it conformed to the popular vogue, but which was untrue to the man whose likeness it was meant to be. In *The Nature of Biography*, John A. Garraty points out that it was the Greek philosophers who created an intellectual climate favourable for the development of biography and quotes Aristotle as saying :

> A man's life can be described, not by listing his ' Characteristics ' but by placing his acts on . . . record so that his character and nature are revealed by them.

Aristotle's protégé, Theophrastus, develops this further in his *Characters* where he gives several examples of specific behaviour, with the purpose of illustrating ' types.' He describes, for instance, the vain character :

> When ambition is the ruling passion of a vulgar mind, it shows itself in the eager pursuit of frivolous distinctions. The vain and vulgar man strives always to gain a place at table next to the master of the feast . . . He takes vast pains to be provided with a black servant, who always attends him in public. If he has a considerable sum of money to pay, he provides himself with new coin for the purpose . . . When his pet dog dies, he deposits the remains in a tomb, and erects a monument above it.

Theophrastus succeeded Aristotle as leader of the Peripatetics ; his rival Aristoxenus, who might be described as the proto-type of Lytton Strachey, was the first to write Lives intended to defend or attack some particular opinion. He projected his viewpoint through the life-story

of some individual. Many other writers of the later Greek school followed on the same lines, describing the subject from as many angles as possible, following a chronological order, and introducing anecodotes and discussion. Their main faults were inaccuracy (the result in some cases of the use of worthless source material, in others of deliberate tampering with facts) and a weakness for the sensational. Later Greek biographers, displeased with the liberties the Peripatetics took with history, set out to rectify this. But they went too far in the other direction. Most of them were scholars working in the libraries in Alexandria. The Peripatetics and Alexandrians may be summed up as biographers by saying that the former were artists whose works were readable but unreliable and uncritical, the latter pedants, producers of factually correct but dull, badly-planned and poorly-written Lives. However, to the Greek writers from Aristotle onwards goes the credit for imparting to biography a literary form, and for giving it status and prestige hitherto lacking.

In the four-fold Life of Our Lord, in the beautiful and evocative vignettes of the Old Testament—Noah, Abraham and Joseph, David, Ruth, Tobias, Judith and Job—the Hebrews can show examples of biography that have stood the test of time and transcended the barriers of language and race.

The Romans had biographical traditions all their own, firmly rooted in their respect for ancestors. Greek interest made itself felt in the course of time; when Plutarch wrote his twin-biographies, pairing off great Greeks and Romans, orators, rulers, conquerors, poets, philosophers, a landmark in biographical writing had been reached. He was the first to achieve objectivity both in dealing with characters whom he admired and whom he detested. He surpassed all his contemporary biographers in scholarship. He was interested in character rather than events. He was masterly in his use of the personal anecdote. Indeed he was before his time by almost two thousand years in his devices for winning and holding his readers' attention. He tells us that he himself profited from the generalizations he had been able to make from his study of great men. In the Life of Timoleon he states:

> I first commenced writing Lives for the sake of others . . . But I find that I proceed and become more attached to it for my own sake, the virtues of these great men serving me as a kind of mirror in which I may note how to order and adorn my own life.

Tacitus and Suetonius were contemporaries of Plutarch. Although Tacitus is better known as a historian than a biographer, his *Life of Agricola* has been acclaimed as the first biography in which the discussion of the hero's personality was effectively fused with the chronological account of his career. While Plutarch and Tacitus were not immediately

appreciated, Suetonius won reputation and popularity within his lifetime : he was a compiler rather than a biographer ; form meant little to him ; he heaped detail upon detail, making no distinction between the significant and the insignificant ; he lacked the imagination, the insight to select from his masses of material the essential features and lineaments of his subject. As secretary to the Emperor Hadrian he was at the very centre of reliable information ; he retailed the scandals of Imperial Rome. His fellow-Romans, whose appetite for the sensational was avid, knew that he had access to official records ; his popularity stemmed from his ability and readiness to cater for scandal-seekers.

Christian martyrs, saints, kings and heroes supplied subjects for biographers for the next thousand years. From ancient church calendars and martryologies, inscriptions and panegyrics, episcopal letters, such as the *Lettre des Églises de Lyon et de Vienne* on their martyrs in the year 177 A.D., hagiography developed to the '*Legend*' stage. The words 'legend' and 'legendary' have come to mean *myth*, *mythical*, *traditional*, the opposite of *fact*, *history* and *historical*. Etymologists and liturgists tell us that *legenda* originally meant that which was read—at a certain stage of Divine Office. In the Roman Breviary of today, the saint's Legend is usually read at the Second Nocturn of Matins, and is a resumé of the Life of the saint whose feast falls that day. Later, lives of saints came to be known as a saint's *Legenda* or Legend ; thus we have the *Legenda prima*, the *Legenda Secunda*, etc., of many medieval saints. René Aigrain, in his fine work on the sources, methods and history of hagiography, traces the development of this branch of writing and incidentally gives excellent advice on the art of sifting the wheat from the chaff when dealing with documents relevant to the medieval saints. The medieval hagiographer usually had a double objective—the edification of his readers and the extension of his saint's clientele. Few of the early hagiographers understood research or had a flair for writing ; fewer still troubled to establish truth ; hence earlier Lives of Saints abounded in anecdotes and accounts of miracles which the writers borrowed freely from one another. We find a miracle recorded by Adamnan of St. Columba recurring in succeeding centuries in connection with other saints and reappearing in a form very slightly altered, in a Life of St. Anthony of Padua, who lived seven hundred years later.

M. Aigrain praises highly the Life of St. Columba by Adamnan and the Life of St. Columban by Jonas of Bobbio. Adamnan succeeded Columba as Abbot of Iona ; his Life bears evidence not only of his intimate acquaintance with Columba but of the trouble he took to consult available records. This Life circulated throughout Europe at the end of the seventh century. 'It was praised', says André Maurois, 'as the most complete example of biography to be found in all European literature not only in the seventh but for many of the succeeding centuries.'

Aigrain, hailing it as a work of the first importance, also salutes Jonas of Bobbio, ' un hagiographe consciencieux et informé dans l'ensemble aux meilleures sources '. Jonas, a monk of Bobbio, wrote early in the eighth century : he interviewed those who had known Columban ; the ludicrous tales appearing in other medieval documents of this kind are absent from his Life of the great Abbot of Bobbio. We see Columban showing an unsuccessful fisherman where to cast his net for a good catch, or choosing the site for the sinking of a well, or surrounded by the fiercer animals of the forest, or ' with little squirrels who had run down the trees to him, nestling in the folds of his cowl.' We meet him, ' eager, passionate, of an absolutely fearless nature—so much so that he was impetuous, even head-strong.'

But these and a few others were the exceptions. Most of the lives written in medieval and early renaissance centuries lacked cohesion and tended to hide the subject beneath masses of facts, some of them quite irrelevant. In the case of the saints the focus was on the miracles, not on the thaumaturgus himself or the manner by which he had attained to the holiness that obtained what his prayers asked of heaven.

Among the chroniclers employed by kings and lords of the blood royal to record their deeds de Joinville stands out. His *Life of St Louis* was biography, traveller's tale and crusade history all in one. He did not hesitate to mention the king's faults as well as his virtues, as for instance Louis' unrestrained grief at the loss of his mother, when on the third day after the death of Blanche of Castille the chronicler took it upon himself to reprimand the monarch for excessive lamentation and lack of self-control. De Joinville was, incidentally, the first of the medieval biographers to use the vernacular instead of Latin.

The exploits of heroes, local and national, were so well-known to all through the *chansons des gestes,* the mimes and folk-dances, the local tales, plays and pictorial arts such as tapestry-weaving, that biographers had, in their case, to be careful not to take any liberties with the traditional portrait. The great deeds of the Spanish hero of the Reconquista, *el Cid,* were handed down in epic after epic, ballad after ballad. Menendez Pidal states that even today the Song of the Cid finds echoes in the popular modern songs of Spain and Portugal, of Tangiers and Chile.

With the rise of humanism, biography took a new turn, first noticeable in Petrarch's Lives of famous Romans and Boccaccio's Life of Dante. Villani, Machiavelli, Vasari and all Renaissance biographers wrote in a spirit of curiosity ; they were concerned with historic truth and interested in the subject's emergence as a real person, not a type. To Vasari we owe the famous story of the fly which Giotto painted on a sitter's nose ; the story was told to illustrate the painter's sense of humour. From Italy the new enthusiasm for biography in the classical manner

and the cult of personality spread to France, England and elsewhere. Erasmus wrote brief sketches of Thomas More and John Colet ; Amyot and the Sieur de Brantôme were the Plutarch and Suetonius of sixteenth century France. More, Roper, Cavendish and later Aubrey brought English biography to the point of transition, the bridge between the early and the modern. The keeper of that bridge was Izaak Walton. In his Lives of Donne, Herbert and others, ' he produced books ', says Garraty, ' that portrayed real men, related them to their work and preserved the sense of chronology and growth that distinguishes biography from the character sketch and the analytical study alike.'

* * *

The evolution of modern biography in the English language came about in three stages which correspond roughly to the eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The period 1750–1850, the era of Boswell, of Dr Johnson, Macauley and Trevelyan, of Lockhart and Brougham, saw a tremendous advance in biography, both as a science and an art. For twenty-one years Boswell stalked his friend and companion, noting the Doctor's every word and action, contriving situations to see how Johnson would react. ' Sir,' remarked Johnson one day, ' you appear to have only two subjects, yourself and me, and I am sick of both.' Boswell's method of fusing narrative and dialogue, biography and autobiography in most diverting and seemingly ingenuous fashion, is not easily imitated. According to Dr Edel in his *Literary Biography*, the only modern biography to succeed on these lines was A. J. A. Symons's *The Quest for Corvo*. When gathering materials for the life of that extraordinary individual, Rolfe, the self-styled Baron Corvo, Symons found his quest so interesting and exciting that he made his book not merely a Life of Corvo but an account of A. J. A. Symons's Adventures in Quest of Corvo ; he sub-titled his work ' An experiment in biography '.

After the middle of the nineteenth century biography fell on lean times. The conventions demanded that the subject be drawn larger than life ; virtue had to predominate even though it might have been singularly missing. Sometimes near relatives or friends were deputed by the family to write the Life ; sometimes the eminent Victorian named his own biographer in his will and left personal papers for his use, having, no doubt, burned anything derogatory. Most of these works were little more than monumental obituary notices. Carlyle, himself a biographer, sums up the general approach of the biographers of his time :

> Do honour to the great ; clean dirt from them ; place them on the proper pedestal.

A reaction was to be expected. It began, ironically enough, with Froude, whom Carlyle had named as his literary executor. Froude's Life of Carlyle was honest and sincere, if lacking in accuracy and discretion. It got a hostile reception, one reviewer writing ' Death is now armed with a new terror.' When, not many years later, a Life of Byron written in the same candid fashion made its appearance another outraged critic asked :

> What right has the public to know of Byron's follies ? He gave them fine verse and they should be satisfied with that.

For a number of years after Froude's *Carlyle* a controversy was waged in the English press as to the ethics of publishing intimate matters concerning a deceased person. When Edmund Purcell was attacked for excessive frankness in his Life of Cardinal Manning, he defended himself in an article ' On the Ethics of Supression in Biography.' To withhold significant information was almost a lie, he said. Edmund Gosse, biographer of Gray, Congreve, Donne and other poets, was, at the turn of the century, the spearhead of the movement to reform biography from within. More than a decade before Lytton Strachey, Gosse was attacking Victorian biography. As might be expected of one who lived at a time when there was an ever-increasing emphasis on scientific objectivity in the writing of history, his hardest words were for those biographers who were not earnest in the pursuit of truth.

Freudian psychological theories, promulgated in the early years of the twentieth century, paved the way for a new type of character study. In the second decade of this century Lytton Strachey burst upon the biographical scene with his *Eminent Victorians, Queen Victoria, Elizabeth and Essex,* and *Books and Characters.* He was not content merely to catalogue ; he selected ; he subordinated public events to the personality of his subject. His powers as a writer were considerable—fine and precise as an etcher's steel pen. His style, brilliant, cynical, disparaging, is what one might expect from a man writing in the days of disillusionment following World War I and looking back at the plushy days of the two preceding generations. Despite their ' starchiness ' his Victorians lived ; he excelled at compressing into one vivid phrase certain aspects of personality, at introducing the right anecdote in the appropriate setting and at the fitting moment. He was a quick and prodigious researcher, with the capacity to unearth vital information rapidly from great masses of documents. He was just as competent when it came to re-spinning this information into the bright but brittle thread of life which was then woven into a literary tapestry.

Unlike Boswell, Lytton Strachey never thrust himself forward, his psychological approach consisted in assessing the effect of exceptional

experiences, friendships or enmities on character. He introduced characters only in so far as they illustrated or affected his central figure—his main objective being to make his main subject stand out clearly in the light of historic truth. It is worth noting that in his biography of Queen Victoria he devoted two-thirds of the work to the formative years of her life. But prejudice and hostility too often caused him to abandon the proper, detached attitude, the role of impartial, neutral observer ; his inclination to give his gift for psychological insight, his sure touch for the incisive, Hudibrastic phrase too free a rein, have earned him the reputation of being the father of the ' de-bunking ' school of biographers.

* * *

Biography, as we know it today, falls into three structural classes :

(1) The traditional or documented work where the biographer allows his subject's speech, letters, etc. to be frequently quoted. These are usually commemorative Lives, official or standard biographies which record the life in chronological order, with copious quotations from letters and the reminiscences of friends. The work has an autobiographical tinge ; background is important. Robert Speaight's *Life of Belloc* is a good example of such standard biography.

(2) The portrait or study, which is based on some essential traits, some unique feature of the subject. Here the minimum of background is given ; there is careful selection and skilful setting. While being historically accurate, the writer, like a portrait-painter, will high-light vivid, telling detail ; his insight will pin-point the essentials that convey his subject's personality. Nicolson's *The Last Journey* falls into this category.

(3) The narrative-cinematic or novel type of biography, in which the writer borrows the methods of the novelist to produce, not fiction, but history. It is not essential to proceed chronologically in this type of biography, nor to quote extensively from documents ; the writer, out of his profound knowledge of his subject, chooses the elements and incidents and scenes that will enable his reader to see the subject as he does. The biographies of Lytton Strachey, André Maurois and Harold Nicholson are of this kind. Character is delineated and analysed and the biographer is free to comment ; but in this very freedom lies the danger to which Strachey himself succumbed—the propagation of one's own prejudices or predilections.

Needless to say, there are many fine biographies which do not fit into these three main classes. Duff-Cooper's *Talleyrand,* for instance. Or that 1957 best-seller, Douglas Woodruff's *The Tichbourne Claimant.* To

the requirements of biography Mr Woodruff's book added the excitement of the detective story.

The Oxford Dictionray defines biography as the history of the lives of individual men as a branch of literature. Sir Edmund Gosse, writing in the *Encyclopedia Brittanica,* described it as the faithful portrait of a soul in its adventures through life. The operative words in these definitions are *history, literature, portrait* and *faithful* ; the words *faithful* and *history* imply truthfulness and accuracy in the record ; the words *portrait* and *literature* imply art. Harold Nicholson holds that biography is primarily a science—a branch of the science of history. His French counterpart, André Maurois, claims that biography is an art, comparable to that of the portrait painter or sculptor. Virginia Woolf held the intermediary view that biography was ' a kind of superior craft.' Dr Leon Edel, the American biographer of Henry James and author of *The Psychological Novel* and *Literary Biography,* maintains that biography is a treble process :

(1) A scientific process when it asks the sciences to elucidate whatever they can about the individual and his personality.

(2) An art process in that it uses language to capture human experiences.

(3) A process involving craftsmanship and this not only as regards skill in writing and research ; as a craft imposes self-discipline on the one who elects to work at it, so biography obliges the writer to master himself ; for not only has he to work within certain well-defined limits, but he has to handle material of rather unpredictable and enigmatic qualities, of a texture rich and varied ; his workshop is the historical period in which his subject lived ; his material the living, thinking human being.

Biography concerns itself with the life-story of an individual. It records what a man did and at the same time attempts to portray the manner of man he was ; it discusses the effect of environment and circumstances upon the subject and analyses the impact of the individual upon his acquaintances and upon his times. All biographical writing must be scientific in that historical truth is the goal and must be proved by documentary or other reliable evidence. But biography also demands imagination and insight, essential tools in the portrayal of character and personality, if the finished portrait is to resemble faithfully the original and be at the same time a work of art. Because the biographer strives to recapture, to re-create—and from such dead things as letters, diaries and other documents — a man as he was at various stages of his life, he certainly must discipline himself as a craftsman ; he has to control his imagination for he may not stray beyond the limits the factual evidence at his disposal imposes upon him ; his skill at his craft will show in the selection and interpretation of his material. The scope of a modern

biographer has an inward as well as an outward sweep, for the study of a life must include thought, emotion, motives, reactions, behaviour, as well as facts, dates, events and developments. By following approved methods a writer can reasonably hope to produce a fairly reliable record of an individual's history. But who can make accurate estimate of the things of the mind and the soul? There are no archives where motives are catalogued and kept. Human temperament and behaviour cannot be put under a microscope, or subjected to laboratory tests.

To attain historical truth the biographer needs to scrutinize carefully the bare bones of evidence. Belloc, in his essay *Historical Evidence,* shows how the English historian Oman in a work on the Peninsular War made Napoleon's forces march three miles to Sir John Moore's forces' one at a certain stage of the campaign, and Moore's army four miles to the French armies' one at another stage, both impossible feats in the circumstances. Such mistakes are inevitable when a writer has neither visited the terrain he describes, nor bothered to measure the relative distances on a map. Apart from human evidence, such factors as climate, the weather on particular occasions, distance, topography, seasonal occupations, holidays and festivals and the concurrence of events have to be taken into consideration. Supposing for instance that a biographer of Edmund Ignatius Rice, Founder of the Irish Christian Brothers, finds that Brother Rice visited his home town of Callan on a certain date in 1832, but left again hurriedly for Waterford (town of the first Foundation) without completing his business. The writer may remember that the schoolmaster, Humphrey O'Sullivan, taught in Callan and kept a diary in Gaelic of these very years. He looks up the diary and finds this entry opposite the date in question :

> There was a scuffle between the soldiers of the 74th Regiment and some of the local boys.

He next consults contemporary newspapers for a fuller account of that 'scuffle,' not only the pro-English dailies but the news-sheets that the leaders of national opinion printed and circulated.

It is not essential that the biographer should study the technical and theoretical aspects of psychology. The ability to assess personality, to penetrate in some measure into the subject's mind, to obtain insight into the workings of that mind, to note the subject's reactions to external influences and his behaviour in certain situations—that is adequate for coming to grips with the psychological side of biography. The selection of materials poses a problem for each biographer as for each subject.

* * *

Most modern biographers follow a chronological order as being more approximate to life, and because readers on the whole prefer to have

life presented in the normal sequence, showing the slow formation and crystallization of character, the influence of others on childhood, youth and later life, the impact of events, the changes rung by the passing years. This sustains the illusion that one is living with the subject for the duration of the book and lets the reader meet secondary characters and new situations when he does, and not before.

It is not so much the amount of background detail given that proves effective as the significant detail—that Dr Johnson used to keep dried orange peels in his pocket ; that Erasmus disliked fish ; that Francis Bacon could not abide the smell of English-cured calf-leather. Contemporary historical events may help to clarify and vivify the subject's portrait, especially when given in his own words or those of an acquaintance. Observation and discernment are more helpful than the intensive study of a period to the biographer intent on providing authentic backgrounds. In *The Dynamics of World History* Christopher Dawson says :

> We can learn more about medieval culture from a cathedral than from the most exhaustive study of constitutional law, and the churches of Ravenna are a better introduction to the Byzantine world than all the volumes of Gibbon.

Belloc bears him out by advising students of early sixteenth century England that they will be better informed on that period ' by reading Shakespeare and then going into the National Portrait Gallery to live with the Holbeins for a week ' than by years of study.

The biographer, unlike the novelist, may not allow his imagination to roam at will ; it may function only in the shaping of the assembled material to the likeness he is striving to reproduce. Precisely because biography deals with real, not fictitious persons, with the dead who do not return to correct the writer or to defend themselves, those who take the responsibility of reconstructing a human life are bound by the laws of truth and charity. The advice of the late Pope Pius XII to literary critics is also relevant as a norm for biographers : ' Base all on truth. Crown all with charity.' A study of the works of such writers as Nicolson, Maurois, Duff-Cooper, Lord Cecil, of H. M. Prescott and Mrs Woodham-Smith, of D. B. Wyndham-Lewis and of that prince of hagiographers, Father Brodrick, might set one wondering which was stronger in the biographer—the passion for truth or the charity that has compassion on the multitude of human frailties.

Like the novelist, the biographer has to describe personality. Here the novelist, dealing with an imaginary person, has a distinct advantage ; he is free to endow his characters with what traits he deems essential for their respective roles. The biographer, dealing as he is with an actual person, has to take his subject as he finds him ; he has to assess qualities and behaviour the interpretation of which might well elude

and baffle even a trained psychologist. And in the end no one, not even the writer himself, can claim that his view of his subject is the right one. Since the advent of Strachey and his followers of the debunking school it has become more and more evident that a biographer can prove almost anything by adroit manipulation of the available facts. Hence it is not uncommon to find Lives of the same individual by different authors so divergent that one might be pardoned for thinking that the biographers were describing not one but several persons. Napoleon and Marie Antoinette are two historical characters who seem to attract writers bent on viewing them from all sorts of angles, some of them quite impossible—as though the biographer trotted about Europe with a cine-camera behind the Little Corporal, or sat knitting for thirty years in the Place de la Revolution awaiting the arrival of the tumbril wending its slow way from the Conciergerie on the Ile de la Cité.

To write a biography should be an exercise in honesty and patience ; it is also, particularly for the biographer not a scholar, an exercise in industry, for he has to gather the sheaves and glean the fallen grain where the learned have reaped ; he is fortunate, for the artistic side of his work, if he has been gifted with imagination and insight. And if his Life is to be a Life, not merely a *Memoir of a Dead Person,* he needs the capacity for enthusiasm, the depth of feeling that will enable him to imbue his subject with some semblance of warm, pulsing life, that will restore to those lost to earth the lineaments of humanity. If the dead whose Lives are being written could speak, one might imagine them imploring their biographers in the last words of Othello :

> . . . . I pray you, in your letters,
> When you shall these unlucky deeds relate,
> Speak of me as I am ; nothing extenuate,
> Nor set down aught in malice . . . .

The Framework of Sudani-Egyptian Relations

by J. J. W. MURPHY

A MODERN map of the Nile and of the area drained by it can be read as a lesson in the need for international cooperation. The Nile has the longest river-basin in the Old or the New World. It is 2,450 miles in a direct line from its multiple sources south of the equator to its twin mouths on the Egyptian Delta north of the 31st parallel. Its windings along that course cover 4,000 miles, not quite as long as the Amazon which gains in length by winding more but does not reach so far from end to end of its basin in one straight line.

For the entire length of its course through Egypt and for most of its way through the Sudan the Nile flows through deserts. As far as its water can be made to reach out into the desert there is life ; beyond that there is little or none. Egypt and the Sudan, 23 million and 10 million people, exist because of the Nile.

Not only their existence but their present civilization and material prosperity depend on it. With its flood-waters the Blue Nile brings down from the Abyssinian hills where it rises, immense quantities of alluvial soil which it spreads over the land in rich brown mud. Out of that mud the founder of modern Egypt, the great Albanian soldier and statesman Mohammed Ali, quadrupled the government revenue and doubled the population of Egypt by growing cotton. He died in 1849 after a reign of forty-five years. Cotton is still the chief cash-crop of Egypt. Cotton exports, including various cotton products made in Egypt, were worth in 1956 over £E107 million. The Egyptian pound was then worth more than the pound sterling.

Moving up the Nile we see Khartoum, the capital of the Sudan, at the junction of the White Nile and the Blue Nile. The White Nile is the main stream, although for reasons that we shall presently see on the map, the volume of water that it brings from its distant sources in Central Africa, is much less than what the shorter stream of the Blue Nile brings from nearby Abyssinia. On the Blue Nile, about half way between Khartoum and the Abyssinian border, is the Sennar dam which turns the water aside into the irrigation channels of a million acres of once-barren land that lies between the diverging courses of the Blue and the White Nile. This is the Gezira, an Arabic word for island. It now provides the Sudan with abundant cotton for export as well as grain and fodder for home consumption. In 1951 the Gezira cotton

crop realized £E54 million of the Sudan's total exports of over £E63 million.[1]

Let it be noted that all this water, which since 1925 has been turning the barren Gezira into fertile farm-land, is so much water the less for Egypt over 400 miles downstream.

> Many fantastic legends of the Middle Ages bear witness to the belief that the Abyssinians held the life of Egypt in their hands . . . in 1325 King Amda Seyon stayed a persecution of the Copts by threatening their oppressor, the Sultan el Nasir, that he would make Egypt a desert. Even in the 16th century the great Albuquerque, viceroy of the Indies, entertained the same idea. One of his grandiose schemes for destroying the Venetian monopoly of the Indian trade and diverting it to the Cape route controlled by the Portuguese, was to persuade the king of Abyssinia to make Egypt an impassable desert by cutting off the Nile. In recent years the king of Abyssinia has approved a more modest scheme for damming the Abai (the Blue Nile) where it emerges from Lake Tana . . . not to desiccate Egypt but so to regulate the flow of the river that less water may run waste to the sea in the flood season.[2]

The map shows a long deep gorge where the river emerges from Lake Tana, and near the head of the gorge the Teissat Falls. A dam built there could dry up the Blue Nile.

Returning to the course of the main stream we see on the White Nile, a short distance south of Khartoum, the Jebel Awliya dam. This dam is only a minor factor in the causes why the White Nile does not bring more water past Khartoum. The symbols of swamp on the map 500 miles farther upstream show the chief reason. There we see many smaller tributaries flowing into two main tributaries, the Bahr el Ghazal on the west and the Sobat on the east, forming a sort of inverted delta. An immense volume of water is fed to all these rivers by the heavy rainfall on the northern slopes of the bordering mountains of Kenya, Uganda, French Equatorial Africa and the Belgian Congo, but most of it is lost in the swamps through which they flow.

It stands to reason that those who live here in the southern Sudan among swamps must be different from those who live amid deserts.

> Geographically and culturally the Sudan falls into two parts. North of the 12th parallel stretches a country of savanna plain and desert, part of the great North African Arabian desert inhabited by the Nubians and the Beja tribes, Hamitic and Arabic-speaking Muslims . . . South of the 12th parallel is the area from which the name ' Sudan ' the country of the Blacks is derived. It is inhabited by a variety of primitive and pagan African tribes.[3]

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[1] *Growth of a Nation,* (H.M.S.O.) p. 16.
[2] *A History of Ethiopia,* Jones and Monroe (O.U.P., 1935) pp. 3–4.
[3] *Growth of a Nation* (H.M.S.O.) pp. 2–3. The full Arabic name is Bilad es Sudan : bilad, a country ; es Sudan, of the blacks. It was formerly applied to all south of the Sahara right across Africa.

In fact the differences between north and south could hardly be greater if they lived at opposite ends of the earth instead of on the banks of the same river, differences in race, in religion, in language, in civilization, in history and in colour.

Swamp is left behind as we follow the main stream out of Equatoria, the southernmost province of the Sudan, and the contour-lines of the hills begin. We wind our way up against the descending stream to where lake Victoria lies between Kenya and Uganda 3,726 feet above sea-level. The hand of the white man is here. The Owen Falls dam inaugurated in 1954 has turned the lake into a huge reservoir both for irrigation and for electric power. From the hills around it many streams, known collectively as the head-waters of the Nile, run into the lake. The main stream flows out at the northern end over the Falls at Jinja, where it has been harnessed to a hydro-electric power-station, on its long journey to Egypt and the Mediterranean sea.

Far away near the other end of the Nile is a primitive instrument called a nilometer. There used to be several of them on the Nile ; that on Roda island in Cairo still does its work as it has done since it was built in the eighth century. It is a well in which stands a pillar graduated in cubits. The water in the well rises and falls with the Nile. A rise to sixteen cubits is considered barely enough ; at twenty-two cubits danger of flooding begins. (A cubit is almost twenty-one and a half inches.) When we remember that every dam and every irrigation channel on the Nile can influence the rise and fall of the river and make the difference between prosperity and ruin for all those who live downstream, it is evident that people who live by the Nile have strong reasons for being on good terms. The alternative is war for the control of the water by which all must live.

The Nile Waters Agreement was concluded between the British and Egyptian governments in 1929, when both were joint-rulers of the Sudan under the system known as the Condominium. It allotted only one-twelfth of the water to the Sudan, although its population was then one-third that of Egypt. Now it is nearly half. The Agreement forbade any building of dams in the Sudan or on the lakes under British jurisdiction outside it, without Egypt's consent. This consent was given in 1949 to a 25-year plan, part of which provided for the building of the Owen Falls dam on Lake Victoria completed in 1954; Egypt contributed to the cost. Another important part, not yet in hand, is a canal at Jonglei by means of which the Nile could by-pass the swamps of the Southern Sudan, and so would not waste its water as it does at present. When in June 1957 the Sudan, now an independent sovereign state, was approached by the Egyptian government about the erection of the High Dam at Aswan, it demanded a revision of the 1929 Agreement as a condition of its consent. As the Sudanese are upstream and the Egyptians

downstream, it is plain that Egypt will have to accept the Sudan's terms or go to war. Recent political moves must be seen against this background, but we must turn to history for a fuller understanding.

In 1820 Mohammed Ali sent an Egyptian army to conquer the Sudan. His aims were thought to be concerned with the gold, slaves and ivory which came to Egypt by the Sudanese trade-routes. But these aims could be achieved without war. As Sir Ronald Windgate points out, the traditional policy of Egypt for thousands of years had been chiefly concerned with the security of its vulnerable southern frontier and with the control of the Nile waters.[1] He compares the situation with that on the Scottish Border during centuries of raiding back and forth with intermittent large-scale invasions by Scots and English.

In many countries we find traditional differences between north and south, with histories of chronic hostility and intermittent violence before they finally decided to live together peacably. The less common case is that which may be called three tiers of differences, such as we find in Great Britain but not in Ireland. The Highland Scots differed in race, language, civilization and religion from the English. In between were the Lowland Scots, different from both and yet akin to both, speaking a language which the Englishman could with an effort understand, sharing his religion and way of life, even though with many reservations, but disliking him and disliked by him generally, yet no more friendly with the Highlander than with the Saxon.

In the Nile valley the counterpart of this three-tiered structure would be Egypt at one end, the Southern Sudan at the other, and the Northern Sudan in between. Egypt, Arabic-speaking and Muslim, is only Arab in its language and religion, not in its national character whose roots lie in 4,000 years of history before the Arab invasion. The Northern Sudan, speaking Arabic with a difference, believing in Islam with a difference, is neither Arab nor Egyptian in character. Its roots are deep in Africa, but intermarriage, trade and invasion from Arabia across the Red Sea and from Egypt across its northern border have made it akin to both. The Southern Sudan belongs to Central Africa, not to the Arab world. Its religion is pagan ; its languages vary from tribe to tribe ; its civilization is that of the primitive negro ; its relations with the Arab world on its northern borders, that of slave-market to slave-trader. Both Egypt and the Northern Sudan were for some centuries Christian ; the Southern Sudan never was.

As the Picts and Scots harassed the northern border of Roman Britain, so the Northern Sudanese, then called Ethiopians, harassed the southern border of Roman Egypt. Domitian and Marcian had the same frontier problem in Upper Egypt that caused Hadrian to build

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[1] *Wingate of the Sudan,* Ronald Wingate (1955), pp. 3 and 10-11.

his wall across the north of England. When Christianity came to the Sudan it did not bring peace. Notwithstanding the conversion of the chief treasurer of the Ethiopian Queen Candace, by the deacon Philip which is recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, there is no certain sign of Christianity in her realms during the first four centuries. She reigned at Merawi, then called Meroe, to the north of Khartoum, and seems to have been one of a dynasty of queens who all bore the name Candace. They were evidently strong rulers. One of them invaded Egypt in Roman times. The Romans sent a punitive expedition which destroyed her capital city in 22 B.C. But the Ethiopian kingdom recovered and survived to accept Christianity in the sixth century A.D. and to hold it until overwhelmed by the last great wave of the Muslim invasions, that of Beybars, the first Mameluke sultan of Egypt, in the thirteenth century.

It was unfortunate that Ethiopia was not converted to Christianity sooner. By the sixth century the Patriarchate of Alexandria, under whose jurisdiction Ethiopia came at its conversion, was fiercely Monophysite, having been fiercely orthodox when its political opponents had been Nestorian. It is doubtful if the Ethiopians ever knew the truth of Christianity untainted by heresy. History records only two names as their national apostles, an Alexandrian priest, Julian, and his successor, Longinus. Both were heretics. Long before their time the monks of Egypt in the Theban desert were so numerous that in the fourth century they were believed to equal the lay population. Why did they not convert Ethiopia on their southern border at least two hundred years sooner ? They cannot have been held back by the dangers of the desert since they lived in it. No doubt the chronic state of border warfare was an obstacle to missionary activity, but it does not seem an adequate explanation of its complete absence over all that time. What the Catholic monks for some reason failed to do, the heretics did.

Out of Beybars's conquest grew the so-called black sultanates, a series of petty negro states stretching from Abyssinia beyond Lake Chad. Their official religion was Muslim. The first, and the only sultanate that concerns us here, was Sennar, whose name we have seen preserved by the Sennar dam on the Blue Nile. It was founded in 1484 by a negro named Funji ; its territory varied with its strength and at one time included most of the Sudan. It lasted down to Mohammed Ali's conquest in 1821. Long before that date Christianity, such as it was, had disappeared from the Sudan. This was how it happened.

Because Muslims honour Jesus Christ as the greatest prophet before the coming of Mohammed, they make sharp distinctions between Christians, Jews, and Pagans. All of course are wrong and all must be made to see the error of their ways, but by different means. The Christian is treated as a second-class citizen in Muslim countries. Pagan nations are made to choose between war and conversion to Islam.

Jews, because their ancestors rejected Christ as they still reject both Him and Mohammed, yet believe in the one true God, are treated worse than Christians but better than Pagans. They are allowed to live. But Jews and Christians had to pay extra taxes for the privilege of being allowed to live in a Muslim state. Such is the traditional policy which naturally has varied very much in its practice according as zeal for Islam rose and fell.

It also varied with the slave-market. The Koran forbids Muslims to enslave Muslims. But Pagans conquered and captured in a holy war were legitimate booty for the slave-dealers. Their mass-conversion would upset the market. Christians and Jews too poor to pay the extra taxes could also be sold as slaves, not because of their religion but because of their debts. Again, their conversion was welcome only to the very zealous ; as long as they could afford to pay taxes, they were profitable to the tax-gatherer; when they could no longer pay, they were profitable to the slave-dealer, provided they kept the courage of their religious convictions.

Under that system the unfortunate Sudanese, then called Nubians, lived from the fifteenth to the late nineteenth century, losing their religious beliefs and their native languages slowly but surely, until Islam and the language of their Arab conquerors from Egypt so completely dominated the northern Sudan that intermarriage began and as a result they became part of the Arab world.

> But the Sudan Arabs differ from the other members of the Arab family owing to the presence of negroid and Hamitic substrata, which have modified their physical character, and because the centuries-long separation from the rest of the Arab-Moslem world enforced by the desert has produced a distinctive national type. The spoken Arabic of the Sudanese also occupies an independent position among the Arab dialects.[1]

In fact a new nation of mixed origins had been added to the Muslim and Arabic-speaking world, almost—one is tempted to think—as the U.S.A. was added to the Protestant English-speaking world in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

As the domestic supply of slaves ran out with the decline of Christianity, the attention of this new Arab nation was turned to the primitive tribes of the southern Sudan. They were pagan savages, usually at war with one another, ready to sell to the slave-traders such captives as they did not want to eat. The benefits of slavery have been so few that perhaps one may be placed to its credit : it probably helped to make canibalism less common in the southern Sudan. The trade in slaves developed into an export trade to which other commodities besides human beings were added.

[1] *The Middle East* 3rd Edition (R.I.I.A.) p. 416.

> Every year two large caravans brought ivory, gum, ostrich-feathers gold-dust and other produce, together with some thousands of negro slaves, to Asyut in Upper Egypt and took back manufactured goods. From about 1810 however, most of this trade was diverted to the Red Sea ports, and about the same time the survivors of the Mamelukes established themselves in Dongola. For both these reasons Mohammed Ali organised an expedition to take possession of the country.[1]

We are now in modern times. Dongola is a name we shall hear again. From there, some sixty years later, was to come a carpenter's son who would bring Mohammed Ali's conquest of the Sudan to nothing, Mohammed Ahmed, the Mahdi.

Mohammed Ali had reason to worry about the Mamelukes in Dongola. In 1811 he had treacherously murdered over 400 of their chiefs whom he had invited to a banquet in the citadel of Cairo. They had ruled Egypt off and on since the thirteenth century, beginning as a pretorian guard to weak rulers whom they made and unmade at will. They had a record of bloody tyranny and a great fighting tradition. All were originally slaves—that is the meaning of their name—either by capture in war or by purchase, and therefore foreigners who despised all Egyptians. Some must have been born Christians. Mohammed Ali may have felt that it was his life or theirs, and his only likely regrets for the massacre were due to its incompleteness. He was no scholar and probably did not know that 2,500 years before that time other refugees from Egypt who had fled to the Sudan, had returned with an invading army of Ethiopians that put an Ethiopian dynasty on the throne of Egypt. He did not need to know. His instinct told him that Egypt is most vulnerable in its southern frontier.

The conquest of the Sudan was easy and on the whole the Egyptian occupation beneficial compared to the conditions it replaced. The Sultanate of Sennar had come to the end of its power ; there was no central authority capable of maintaining order. Egyptian administration brought security, in which trade, including the slave-trade improved.

The private armies of the slave-traders grew bigger and were better armed. The spears of the southern tribesmen were not much use against their guns. Fortunately in 1863 Isma'il, grandson of Mohammed Ali, became ruler of Egypt.[2] He was under the influence of western ideas about progress and civilization, so he decided to abolish effectively the slave-trade which his predecessor Sa'id (after whom Port Said is named) had already abolished on paper. Because the Koran permitted slavery he felt that it was wiser to put European Christians in charge of his plan

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[1] *The Middle East* p. 418.

[2] He is known as the Khedive Isma'il, a title which he got from his overlord the Sultan of Turkey. It means ' hereditary viceroy ', a reminder that Egypt was a vassal-state of the Turkish empire, which it remained till the war of 1914-18.

rather than Sudanese or Egyptians. That drew the criticism of his countrymen in his own time and in ours. More serious, it gave Muslim officials in the Sudan another excuse for non-cooperation.

Only the name of Charles Gordon is remembered now of those who worked for the Khedive Isma'il against slavery in the southern Sudan ninety years ago. Yet they were a remarkable group, forerunners, as it were, of a United Nations team, for they came from Italy, America, Germany and Austria as well as from Britain. They had few resources beyond their own strong characters to enforce the good intentions of Isma'il against the vested interests of the slave-trade in the wilds of the far Sudan, where only the writ of the local tyrants ran.

Gordon was one of that minority of British army officers who have hired their swords to armies not their own, and by giving such loyal service as money could never buy, have redeemed the name of mercenary from reproach. They would not fight against Britain—that was understood—but they would and did fight against particular British interests that clashed with those of the governments which they served. The British government tacitly accepted this code when it permitted officers to serve foreign rulers while retaining their rank in the British army. Thus in the 1860's Gordon found himself in the service of the Chinese government, building up the Chinese army demoralized by foreign and domestic defeats, putting down a Russian-sponsored rebellion, and getting China to stand on her own feet able to deal with all foreigners, including British, on equal terms. When he returned to Britain he was a popular hero : the newspapers built him up as ' Chinese Gordon ', a Christian crusader of the nineteenth century in the Far East. Seldom has popular acclaim come so near to the truth about a man. His success in war and in adminstration showed him to have talents well above the average, but far above the average was his religious faith and practice. He was a Bible Christian of the traditional English Protestant type, but with a mystical turn of mind that made him feel at home in the East where God and the supernatural are taken for granted as an integral part of ordinary human life. He had what would now be called an old-fashioned conscience not out of fashion in the England of his time, which he carried with him to the end. Conscience was to him the voice of God as the Bible was God's written word.

In 1873 Gordon was invited by the Khedive to take over the governorship of Equatoria from Sir Samuel Baker, a giant in every way, whose strength of body and of character had dealt the first blows against the slave-trade two years before, and who was now worn out by the struggle. Two years showed Gordon that the struggle was hopeless in Equatoria while in the rest of the Sudan his efforts could be frustrated by Egyptian government officials who were all making money out of the slave-trade. He resigned from Equatoria, giving the Khedive his reason, and went

back eventually as governor-general of the Sudan with all the power that the Khedive could give him, at all events on paper. For two years more Gordon fought the slave-trade with considerable, but not complete success. Then, broken in health, he resigned in protest against the deposition of his master the Khedive, which the French and British governments had enforced through his overlord, the Sultan, in favour of Isma'il's more complaisant son.[1] An Egyptian, whom Gordon had dismissed was appointed to succeed him as governor-general. Next year, 1881, came the man from Dongola, Mohammed Ahmed el Mahdi.

The Mahdi appears every so often in Muslim history. Some holy man announces himself as the Mahdi, a sort of Muslim messiah foretold by the Prophet. A successful Muslim reformer usually founds a new dynasty, such as that in Cyrenaica or in Saudi Arabia in our time. There is no distinction in Islam between Church and State, so there is no reason to see in this the result of worldly ambition. It does of course satisfy worldly ambition too, but its aim is, in theory, to set up a rule of the elect for the good of mankind and the glory of Allah. Eventually the reform finds its place in the framework of Islam as one of the accepted ' ways of salvation' called *tariqas*. These have sometimes been compared to ' third orders ' in the Catholic church. The only one that I knew personally was the Senussiya of Cyrenaica. As far as I could see, it modified Islam not by adding anything to traditional practice, still less by subtracting, but rather by a change of emphasis from prayer to works of charity. Moreover, as every Muslim in the country was a member of it, the comparison with a Catholic ' third order ' does not fit.

The movement started by the Mahdi in 1881 is now a respectable *tariqa* in the Sudan, called the Ansar, of which the spiritual head is the Mahdi's posthumous son, Sir Sayed Abd el Rahman el Mahdi, K.B.E.[2] His famous father had started his campaign in 1881 by denouncing his Egyptian fellow-Muslims for contaminating the purity of Islam by Christian contacts, to which he declared all the misfortunes of the Muslim world were due. He called upon all uncontaminated Sudanese to take up the sword of Islam and restore the Muslim way of life, which included the slave-trade that Gordon and his fellow-Christians, and that misguided Muslim the Khedive, were trying to suppress. This denunciation of wicked foreign influences combined with the declaration of confidence in native homespun virtue and the adroit appeal to big business as represented by the slave-trade rather reminds one of certain American religious movements. But Mohammed Ahmed was a genuinely

[1] Isma'il was deposed because he did not cooperate in the measures of financial control necessary to meet his vast debts to European banks. Gordon sympathised with him and said so publicly, but some writers deny that he resigned out of loyalty to Isma'il. The D.N.B. says that he did, and so does the latest authority, Richard Hill in his book *Egypt in the Sudan* (O.U.P. 1959) p. 144.

[2] He died in March and was succeeded by his son.

holy man. His faith in his divine mission was sincere. He had spent many years in prayer and study of the Koran, and in the practice of that asceticism to which oriental piety tends. Without that faith and that background of austere piety, he never could have gained such a following in the Sudan.

Undoubtedly there were reasons other than religious for a revolt against Egypt. The quality of Egyptian officials in the Sudan was seldom high, for it was looked on as a bad station to which men of poor quality or bad records were relegated. There was misgovernment and over-taxation in Egypt as well as in the Sudan, but naturally it was more resented by the Sudanese because it was foreign. 'Death to Turkish oppression' was one of the war-cries of the Mahdi revolt, but by Turks they meant British and Egyptians, for even to the present day all foreigners are called 'Turks' in the Sudan. Within three years nearly every Egyptian garrison in the Sudan had surrendered to the Mahdi. Gordon came back from England to save something out of the wreck. From February 1884 to January 1885 he defended Khartoum against hopeless odds while Mr Gladstone argued that it was no business of his government to intervene between the Sudan and Egypt. Forgetting, if he ever knew anything about the slave-trade, he had called the Sudanese 'a people rightly struggling to be free'. When he changed his mind and sent a military expedition to Khartoum it was too late. The expedition arrived three days after Gordon had been killed in the last assault of the Mahdi's men that captured Khartoum. When the severed head was shown to him, the Mahdi expressed his sorrow that so good a man was killed. Within six months, in June of that year he too was dead. Had he lived, there was nothing to stop him from invading Egypt. The British expedition to Khartoum just managed to make good its retreat back across the desert with heavy loss.

The Mahdi's successor, Abdullahi el Khalifa, was an able and unscrupulous fanatic who had no use for kingdoms not of this world. Fortunately for Egypt he turned first to attack the nearest Christian nation, Abyssinia. When the rest of the Christian East on the plains by the river and the sea was submerged under the waves of Muslim conquest, Abyssinia had survived upon its mountains for over a thousand years. So it happened again. The Khalifa lost 20,000 of his best troops in three hard campaigns. At last he won a barren victory which he did not dare to press home. Then in 1889 he turned on Egypt. But Egypt was now ready for him.[1]

His invading army was completely defeated at Toski a short distance inside the Egyptian border by a combined force of British, Egyptians and Sudanese. The British were there in their own interests; the

[1] He is known by his title Khalifa, which is the Arabic for lieutenant or successor. Its older English form, caliph, meant successor or vicar on earth of the Prophet.

security of their communications through the Suez Canal committed them to the defence of Egypt. But why the Sudanese, fighting against their fellow-countrymen? Commenting on what he calls the British Liberal government's 'moral timidity' in regard to British responsibilities in the Nile Valley, a modern Sudanese writer says:

> They eventually came to realise that the Sudanese were not 'a people rightly struggling to be free' but a formidable army busily planning to take the liberty of others.[1]

Liberty in the Sudan meant only liberty to oppress and to enslave. The same writer, whose Sudanese father and grandfather lived through it, describes the Khalifa's rule as a military dictatorship maintained by continual wars, foreign and civil, and a police-state in which nobody could be trusted:

> The father lost confidence in the son and the son could not trust the father. On a scale without parallel in modern history the fire of revolution started to devour its own makers, and the gallows in every field and open space of the towns presented almost as familiar a sight as the public parks.[2]

That was why more and more Sudanese joined the Egyptian army and hoped, after the battle of Toski, for the reconquest of the Sudan and the liberation of their country from the Khalifa's tyranny. But without British help, military and financial, the Egyptian government could not hope to succeed in such an undertaking. The British did not see why they should help. A French move towards the Upper Nile, however, made them open their eyes. It was the ancient threat to Egypt from a hostile power upstream. The British treasury advanced £500,000; British reinforcements were sent to the Egyptian army. The army of the Khalifa was defeated at Atbara in April 1898 and completely destroyed at Omdurman four months later.

It is important to realize that, although the army that won at Omdurman was commanded by a British general and officered in the senior ranks by British officers, it was an Egyptian army. The British units sent out from England were two infantry brigades, one cavalry regiment, two batteries of artillery. The Egyptian army had two Sudanese and two Egyptian infantry brigades, and their cavalry and artillery were about four times as strong as the British. Apart from those British units, every British officer in the Egyptian army, from Kitchener down, held his commission from the Khedive and was paid by the Egyptian treasury, and had earned his pay by years of hard work and devoted service

[1] M. A. Nigumi, *A Great Trusteeship*, p. 27.

[2] Nigumi, *op. cit.* P. 19. Some recent English writers have a good word for the Khalifa, but in the Sudan his traditional reputation remains almost as bad as that of Cromwell in Ireland. cf. P. M. Holt *The Madist State*

building up that army of Egyptian conscripts and Sudanese refugees into an efficient fighting force. The Egyptian claim to have reconquered the Sudan is fully justified by the facts and figures of Atbara and Omdurman. The French had no option but to withdraw from the Upper Nile. It was now, and would remain for the next fifty-six years, in the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan.

British and Egyptian administrators now set to work side by side to build up peace and prosperity in a country that had been torn by wars and ravaged by famine and disease. Because memories of former Egyptian rule were unhappy for the Sudanese, it became accepted policy that the British should take the lead. This policy was successful in winning the confidence and cooperation of the inhabitants. But it was hard on Egyptian officials to serve under British in a country conquered by Egypt. It led also to friction between the British and Egyptian governments over ultimate aims. It was the British policy that the Sudan should be free to choose, and strong enough to choose, between complete independence or some link with Egypt or with Britain. Egypt refused any right of choice except union with Egypt, until in 1952 General Neguib wisely conceded the right to choose complete independence also.

This concession was well-timed for Egypt's ultimate aim. In the prosperity of the previous fifty years an educated class had grown up in the Sudan, eager for political power and for higher offices in the administration that their training and ability had so far secured. When the Egyptian government followed its concession with a demand that the Sudanese should make their choice quickly and that, in order to make the choice completely free, all foreign officials and troops should be withdrawn, the bait was irresistible to most of the educated office-seekers, but the majority of Sudanese saw that its object was to get rid of the British who had stood for Sudanese independence, and when they were gone, to enforce union with Egypt. This they would not have.

In 1953 a general election gave a small majority of seats, but not of votes, to the pro-Egyptian party, the National Unionists, led by Isma'il el Azhari. It was the first general election ever held in the Sudan. The electorate was largely illiterate. Azhari had the sense to see that it did not represent the feeling of the people, but he was under heavy pressure from his Egyptian backers, whose radio propaganda from Cairo had done well for him. He invited General Neguib to Khartoum for the opening of Parliament on 1 March 1954. Neguib came to witness the triumph of the pro-Egyptian party. Next day he flew back to Cairo, lucky to have escaped with his life. There was no opening of Parliament and no triumph for Egypt. Khartoum was in the hands of thousands of armed tribesmen, who did not know much about elections but knew that they did not want Egyptian rule in the Sudan. They voted with

their swords more intelligently than with the unfamiliar ballot-boxes. The Indian representative on the International Commission to supervise the elections introduced a system of symbols—animals, tools, weapons, etc.—printed on voting-papers and used in his own country for illiterates who could not read the names of candidates, thus ensuring the secrecy of the ballot whatever about the understanding of the voters. Azhari was probably not displeased that Neguib had seen for himself the trouble that the pro-Egyptian party had run into. Gradually he swung over to independence, hoping to recover the ground his party had lost by subservience to Egypt. He survived politically to declare the Sudan an independent sovereign state in January 1956. In July a coalition of the opposition parties with religious backing from the rival heads of the two chief *tariqas,* Sir Ali el Mirghani of the Khatmia and Sir Abd el Rahman el Mahdi of the Ansar, defeated Azhari in Parliament, and Abdullah Khalil of the Umma, the traditional party of independence, became Prime Minister. He was succeeded in November 1958 by a military dictatorship on the Egyptian pattern under General Abboud, whose policy towards Egypt seems to be waiting on events there and in Iraq.

The Southern Sudan is one of the few countries where the black population have not been exploited by white men. It is not yet a century since white men went to live in the southern Sudan. None of them went to make money. First came Christian missionaries, Italian, Austrian, American, British ; then civil administrators of the Anglo-Egyptian government, doctors, nurses, education officers, welfare workers, all British, for no northern Sudanese or Egyptian dared go there because of memories of the slave-trade, until very recent times. The black people saw the coming of independence with dismay. For them it meant that the white rulers, who had done them much good and no evil, were to be replaced by descendants of the slave-traders. Elections meant little to them ; even if they could understand the symbols on the Indian voting-papers, they were only one-quarter of the ten million total. But they had an army, or thought they had. The Equatoria Corps of the Sudanese Defence Force was recruited locally. It would not fail them. Had not all its British officers been withdrawn, the men might perhaps have learned the truth in time. The Equatoria Corps mutinied ; the police and many civilians joined them. Within a few days the whole Province was in rebillion against the new Sudanese government.

So little did the mutineers understand the political situation that they sent wireless signals to Nairobi explaining their position and asking for British reinforcements. These signals were picked up by the Khartoum government wireless and passed to the last Governor-General Sir A. Helm Knox, who was handing over the administration to the new government, but had not yet handed over command of the Sudanese Defence Force. By wireless he ordered the mutineers to surrender at

once, or take the consequences from their own government. They answered by signalling that they would obey his orders, but they asked that British troops might be sent to take their surrender instead of Northern Sudanese. He refused, but promised that his own personal representative would go with the troops. Nearly three hundred Northern Sudanese lost their lives in the rebellion. It was followed by 200 death-sentences and over 1000 sentences of imprisonment. Not a good start.

The framework of Sudani-Egyptian relations is made up of geographical and historical facts. The facts of geography, unchanging in themselves but coming more under human control with the progress of science, are the relative positions on the Nile of Egypt and the Sudan, their dependence on the water of the Nile, the control of the Nile's sources by two foreign powers, Britain on the White Nile at Uganda and Abyssinia on the Blue Nile. The facts of history, whose physical and psychological consequences remain, are the tradition of border warfare between Egypt and her southern neighbours, the destruction of Christianity in Nubia by Muslim invaders from Egypt, the evolution of a mixed people no longer Christian in the northern Sudan joined by ties of blood to the negroid pagan south, yet Arabic-speaking and Muslim, Mohammed Ali's conquest of the Sudan, the slave-trade, the revolt of the Mahdi, the tyranny of the Khalifa, the reconquest and Anglo-Egyptian rule, the achievement of independence, the recent rebellion of the Black Sudan with its pathetic appeal to the white man against the Arab, and the stern rejection of that appeal. *Rien de si brutale comme un fait.* Politicians may talk as if these facts did not exist, but they must act within this framework.

Gerard Murphy

1901-1959

by COLM O LOCHLAINN

IT is not so many years since Gerard Murphy wrote with admirable clarity and genuine feeling of the life and work of our great teacher Professor Osborn Bergin, the leading Celtic scholar of his day. Now the pupil has gone to join the master, leaving a gap that is hard to fill in the diminishing ranks of Celtic scholars. Knowing him and working with him as I did for many years, I should like to pay tribute to his gallant life and splendid work.

Born in 1901 in Clones, Co. Monaghan, the second son of Henry Murphy, solicitor (later County Registrar), he was baptized Henry Gerard, but through schooldays and later he was known to family, friends and students as Gerard. His first formal schooling was at Father Sweetman's famous school, Mount St. Benedict, Gorey. There he developed a taste for Classics and for Irish. Francis Ormsby, a fellow learner with me at the Summer school of Irish, Coláiste Chonnacht, Tourmakeady in 1911, was Gerard's first teacher of Irish. When I first met him he was teaching Classics at the Grammar School, Sligo. He became an enthusiastic student of Irish, and I am sure was an inspiring teacher.

Like Stokes and Meyer in a previous generation, it was through a full Classical training that Gerard came to the study of Irish, Old-Irish and Welsh ; and the exactitude and discipline of Greek and Latin scholarship moulded and guided his approach. Gerard entered University College, Dublin in 1918 with a scholarship in the Classical Group, and he maintained his lead by gaining First-Class Honours and an exhibition in each year of his course. Feeling more and more drawn to Celtic studies, he rarely missed a lecture in Old-Irish or Welsh. He became a life-long friend of his professors, Osborn Bergin and John Lloyd-Jones, both of whom had the highest opinion of his intelligent approach to study, his enquiring mind, and his meticulous attention to detail, linguistic, grammatical and historical.

After taking his M.A. degree he worked for two years in the National Library, where he came under the kindly and inspiring influence of Dr Richard Irvine Best, himself a noted Celtic scholar and palaeographer. In 1924 he married Máire, daughter of David O'Neill from Limerick, but the shadow of ill-health, which made his hold on life so tenuous in the last few years, soon darkened the day for the young couple. Gerard

spent the years 1925–30 in Switzerland, and a wonderful cure was wrought on his frail body. When he returned to Dublin he was appointed on the staff of University College, where his lectures on Bardic Poetry and Early Modern Irish attracted many Honours B.A. and M.A. students, and indeed some of his colleagues on the staff, including myself. At a later date, 1948, he was given a special Professorship in the History of Celtic Literature; and I took over his classes in Bardic Poetry, knowing that he was always ready to help me and to solve any problems I might encounter.

In 1939, with the aid of the Adam Boyd Simpson bequest, *Éigse* : A Journal of Modern Irish Studies was founded, with Gerard as editor and myself as printer and publisher. Thus was begun a collaboration, in study and in print, which lasted until his death in April 1959. He was always ready to discuss any article I prepared, and to him is due in large measure any worth that is to be found in my contributions to *Éigse*. I feel sure that many another contributor would join me in similar gratitude for helpful suggestion and timely correction.

He was the kindliest of friends and the most helpful of scholars. Throughout a life-time of failing health he never complained, he never railed at fate. For there was a deep spiritual side to his nature ; a religious feeling which led him to read and interest himself in Catholic philosophy and the writings of the Fathers of the Church. On his visits to the Gaeltachts of Kerry and West Cork—Cúil Aodha was his favourite haunt for many summers—he was always seeking for prayers and religious verse ; and the collection from Corca Dhuibhne which he published in *Éigse* (Vol. iii. pp. 79-100) is one of the best since Hyde's *Religious Songs of Connacht*.

But I must go back and tell a little of all that he has written. The earliest printed article I know of was issued in 1920 in the first number of *An Reult* the journal of the Gaelic Society in University College Dublin. It is the story of Mochua, Cochlán and Guaire ; and how the simple prayer of Mochua, ever afterwards known as *An Phaidir Gheal* (The White Paternoster) found favour before the throne of God. It is a splendid retelling of an ancient tale, and as an example of well-written Modern Irish, free alike from triviality and pomposity, lucid and grammatical, it is a great achievement for a boy scarce twenty years of age.

Back in Dublin from his long exile on the Continent he set to work on a project to which he was to devote over twenty years. This was the completion of *Duanaire Finn* (The Book of the Lays of Finn) of which the late Professor Eóin MacNéill had edited the first half as Vol. vii of the Irish Texts Society in 1904. It is a collection made for Captain Somhairle MacDonnell an Irish Officer in the Spanish Service, and it was written in the Netherlands in the seventeenth century. Gerard transcribed and translated the remaining portion of the text and this was issued as Vol.

xxviii of the Irish Texts Society in 1933. The third volume contains Introduction, Notes, Appendices and Glossary, with further Indexes and Appendices in which Gerard had the assistance of Anna O'Sullivan, Professor Idris L. Foster and Father Brendan Jennings O.F.M. The war interfered much with this production as the printing was being done in Belgium, and it did not appear until 1954.

Now that we have the three volumes before us, we can well marvel at the wealth of scholarship, the ripe judgment and above all the patience that were needed to bring such a work to completion. I should here mention an essay 'Folklore as a help to the understanding of the Irish Fionn Cycle' which Gerard published in the Swedish journal *Folk Liv* in 1938, as I do not think it finds a place, as well it might, in Vol. iii.

In 1948 he published a pamphlet *Glimpses of Gaelic Ireland*, two lectures that he had given in 1942 and in 1945 in a public series at University College. These are 'Irish Folk Poetry' in which he quotes many of his *collectanea* from Cúil Aodha, and 'Warriors and poets in Thirteenth-Century Ireland' in which he shows how important for family history, genealogy and chronology were the poems, laudatory and otherwise, in which the poets addressed the chieftains to whom they were attached.

During these years he had been helping with the *Catalogue of Irish MSS. in the Royal Irish Academy* and exercising an editorial authority over a series of *Irish Texts from Manuscript Sources* which was sponsored by the Government Stationery Office.

As well as the appreciation of Osborn Joseph Bergin mentioned at the outset (*Studies* Vol. 20) he also contributed to *Studies* 'The Origins of Early Irish Nature Poetry' (Vol. 39) and many other articles listed hereunder.

In *Ériu* he printed: 'Notes on Aisling Poetry' a study of the development of this poetic form so popular with the eighteenth century Munster countryside poets; 'Callen o custure me' wherein he proved that Shakespeare's garbled line could reasonably be construed as 'Cailín ó Chois tSiúire mé'; 'Bards and Filí'; 'A vision concerning Rolf Mac Mahon'; 'Two Irish poems written from the Mediterranean in the thirteenth century' and innumerable short notes and reviews, in addition to the splendid collection of religious rhymes and prayers mentioned above, as well as poems both from manuscript and oral sources.

But there is one short article in *Ériu* (Vol. xvii, 1955) 'Finn's Poem on May day' in which he shows such a mastery of Old-Irish, such judgment in building up his text, that one is forced to say 'Here is a scholar worthy to rank with Meyer'. For it is one of Meyer's *Four Old-Irish Songs of Summer and Winter* (1903) that he is re-editing.

And this brings me to his latest and his greatest book *Early Irish Lyrics* issued by Oxford University Press in 1956.

So much of the corpus of Irish literature is taken up with historical, genealogical or topographical poems, that the genuine lyric tends to be obscured. Gerard's book, with its admirable introduction and copious notes, fixes for ever the amount, the importance and the literary worth of the lyrical poems remaining to us from an earlier day. *Early Irish Lyrics* is an anthology of these poems, with notes and glossary—a complete and admirable class-book, running to well over three hundred pages.

Here again Gerard has been treading in the steps of the masters. Of the fifty-eight poems, some had already been edited by Stokes and Strachan in their monumental *Thesaurus Palaeohibernicus,* some by Thurneysen in *Irische Texte,* many by Meyer in the *Zeitschrift,* in *Ériu* and elsewhere. But Gerard, while making full use of all their work, went to prime sources for his basic text, and with his unfailing judgment built up, word by word and line by line, a satisfactory verse form to fit the period of composition. He has limited the scope of the anthology to poems which can with reasonable certainty be dated from the eighth to the twelfth century. What a well-worded translation he gives us ; what full and satisfying notes, both on language, metrics and historical background, what a splendid glossary and index of names.

One feels that if, somewhere in the ' Celtic Otherworld ', there is a corner for Scholars, where O'Curry and O'Donovan, Stokes and Strachan, Zimmer, Meyer, Thurneysen, MacNéill and Bergin can foregather, that the older men will welcome the newcomer Gerard Murphy as an equal in their midst.

OTHER ARTICLES IN *Studies*

Scotti Peregrini (in two parts) ... ... Vol. 17

Royalist Ireland ... ... Vol. 24

Daniel O'Connell and the Gaelic Past ... ... Vol. 27

The Social Function of a Gaelic Ruler ... ... Vol. 29

The Natural History of Literature ... ... Vol. 29

The Two Patricks ... . Vol. 32

T. W. T. Dillon, 1896–1946 ... ... Vol. 35

Irish in our Schools, 1922–45 ... ... Vol. 37

Douglas Hyde, 1860–1949 ... ... Vol. 38

A Note on J. D. Salinger

by AUGUSTINE MARTIN

J. D. Salinger cuts a strange, puzzling, solitary figure among modern American writers. It is not difficult to see why critics have in general avoided him.

He is not accommodating to the critic for he is of no school ; he is neither ' Southern ' nor ' Proletarian ' nor ' Expatriate ' nor ' Beat Generation ' : the critic cannot easily connect him with contemporary literary trends, cannot assume in him a past or a tradition which might conveniently prop him up for inspection and analysis. Consequently, especially on this side of the Atlantic, little of value has been written on him and practically nothing is known about him except that he has written a superb short novel entitled *The Catcher in the Rye* and a fascinating collection of short stories called *For Esme with Love and Squalor.*

This would seem very slight achievement on which to base a reputation such as Salinger's, especially as *The Catcher in the Rye*—the first of his books —appeared as late as 1951. But it is a reputation unsupported by showmanship or publicity ; it owes nothing to the films—which from the internal evidence of his books, he hates ; it depends solely on the lonely creative endeavour that went into two books which combine astonishing personal intensity with technical brilliance. These two books despite their indefinable elusive quality are emphatically American in idiom and sensibility, yet they place him in a class apart from all modern American writers.

This is not to say that Salinger is without roots or tradition. Reviewers have seen in him a similarity to Scott FitzGerald, presumably because he brilliantly exposes the society in which he lives. The comparison is to some extent valid, though I hope to show elsewhere in this article that they are basically different. To find a really genuine ancestor to *The Catcher in the Rye* however, one must go back to Mark Twain.

In *Huckleberry Finn* the author depicts the world with terrifying reality and accuracy as seen through the eyes of a child. The novel is delivered consistently from this viewpoint and all the events and experiences gain tremendously in significance and in poignancy. The world, frequently a hostile one, appears in enlarged and more momentous outline as seen through Huck's eyes and as interpreted in his brash but very eloquent urchin vocabulary.

In *The Catcher in the Rye* Salinger takes for his hero, an adolescent, Holden Caulfield, and applies to him the same technique. Because he is an adolescent, and is consequently much more sensitive to the pressures

of life and more complex in his reactions to them, the problem of rendering his vision becomes correspondingly more difficult.

Again Huck's adventures took place against the comparatively uninhabited waterways of the Mississippi, but Holden Caulfield lives out his week-end experiences against the corrupt teeming background of New York City. As a result the material demands a more complex vision, and a deeper spiritual intensity than Mark Twain's, while giving more scope for social comment. The demands imposed by these factors might have proved the downfall of a lesser craftsman than Salinger, but he turns them to superb advantage.

He projects himself into his adolescent hero, adopts his conscience, his clumsy self-conscious mannerisms, his sustained rebellion agains his environment. His profane, repetitious, slangy idiom, he turns into an instrument of extraordinary expressiveness and flexibility.

The Catcher in the Rye is an extremely unceremonious book. Here is how it opens :

> If you really want to know about it, the first thing you'll probably want to know is where I was born, and what my lousy childhood was like, and how my parents were occupied and all before they had me, and all that David Copperfield kind of crap but I don't feel like going into it. In the first place, that stuff bores me, and in the second place, my parents would have two haemorrhages apiece if I told anything pretty personal about them. They're quite touchy about anything like that, especially my father. They're *nice* and all—I'm not saying that—but they're also as touchy as hell. Besides, I'm not going to tell you my whole autobiography or anything. I'll just tell you about this madman stuff that happened to me around last Christmas before I got pretty run-down, and had to come out here to take it easy.

He is writing from the safe side of a nervous breakdown and he sets out to relate the psychological experience that led up to it. Here, very subtly he hints at a lack of understanding between himself and his parents, and his pointed reticence about them throughout the book makes it clear that they play a very little part in the working out of his spiritual difficulties.

The ' madman stuff ' takes place in New York over one rather hectic week-end. He has been expelled from his fourth school—' On account of I was flunking four subjects and not applying myself and all.' He cannot stand the thought of finishing the term and as yet he is not prepared to face his parents. He packs his bags, gets his money together and takes a train for New York where he intends to spend the remaining week-end while he thinks things out. He checks in at an obscure hotel which is revealed to be ' lousy with perverts '. By this time, Salinger, by his oblique method of hint and suggestion has gradually made us aware that

Holden Caulfield beneath his profane exterior is a youth of unique spiritual sensitivity bordering on neurosis. His peculiar spiritual disposition has hitherto prevented him from adapting himself to the grossly materialistic, in his own word ' phoney ' society in which he is forced to live. He understands himself as little as anyone else does, and his apartness is becoming increasingly more painful to him. He decides to savour some of the pleasures that ' normal ' people enjoy in the big city. This launches him on a series of misadventures which include an abortive attempt to date a fast girl, a drinking session, an unfulfilled overture with a prostitute, a necking date with a girl called Sally, whom he does not like, a visit to the theatre to see the Lunts, and a banal series of less developed incidents, some comic, some sordid, which gives him a cumulative feeling of unhappiness and disgust with himself and the world. (In one way it is a modern version of the resonant theme of Ecclesiastes—' vanity and vexation of spirit '.)

In the midst of his dejection he takes the risk of visiting his little sister Phoebe to whom he is utterly devoted and who forms a sort of still point of innocence and sincerity in the midst of all the shabby dissatisfying relationships in the book. But while she can give him temporary solace and happiness, she cannot give him the adult understanding that he acutely feels the need of.

He cannot return to his ' perverty hotel ' so he rings up an ex-teacher of his, a Mr Appolini, who invites him to spend the night at his apartment, with a view to working out his problems.

Physically and mentally exhausted, it is his last despairing effort to confront his problem rationally, to find a compromise with society, that will not destroy his innate sense of integrity. Appolini seems on the point of giving him an answer to his spiritual dilemma, when he too proves to have feet of clay. Just as the lad is going to sleep on the couch, he makes a suggestive drunken pass at him and Holden, appalled, gets up and goes out into the cold early morning—to spend the rest of it in a railway waiting-room in the depths of misery.

From this point onwards his nerves begin to crack up, though before his final breakdown he is granted a few hours of peace and happiness as he wanders through Central Park with Phoebe, who has missed a half-day at school to be with him.

This is an extremely crude summary of a novel that depends almost entirely on subtlety and suggestion for its impact. It is a summary which gives no idea of the hilarious humour which is interwoven through the entire narrative and which relieves the essential tragedy of the theme. But it gives us a basis on which to examine some of Salinger's underlying sensibilities and pre-occupations. First of all Holden Caulfield's inability to succeed in his environment, which at the outset appeared to indicate a lack in him, slowly emerges as a lack in his environment. Underneath

his profanity and aggressiveness we slowly see that he has an irresistible need for honesty, integrity and particularly innocence. The standards by which he is asked to live offend his sense of integrity, they are ' phoney ', consequently he rejects them, and his revolt, because he is abnormally sensitive, drives him to a state of nervous break-down. One can list the things which exasperate him ; the barefaced snobbery of the high-class boarding-schools to which he was sent, a suggestive remark about a girl he loves which causes him intense anguish, the hollowness of the Ivy League man who calls the Lunts ' angels ', the second-rate clichés of the movies, the mentality of morons who write obscene legends on walls where children like his little sister may see them. The whole pressure of society seems calculated to crush all innocence and honesty from people, but he—though not at all consciously—refuses to be crushed.

It is significant that there are three key figures recurrent in Holden's thoughts, his sister Phoebe, his younger brother Allie, who is dead, and thirdly, his elder brother, D.B.

What he has to say of D.B. is interesting :

> He's got a lot of dough now. He didn't use to—he used to be just a regular writer, when he was home. He wrote this terrific book of short stories, *The Secret Goldfish,* in case you never heard of him. The best one in it was ' The Secret Goldfish '. It was about this little kid who wouldn't let anyone look at his goldfish because he bought it with his own money. It killed me. Now he's out in Hollywood, being a prostitute. If there's one thing I hate it's movies. Don't even mention them to me.

Here is the central crux of Salinger's spiritual sensibility. D.B. has forsaken the child and the gold-fish and the world of innocence they represent, and has sold out to the flashy success of Hollywood. This is a thing for which Holden can never forgive him, however much he likes and admires him. He is left with two symbols to hold on to. The tragedy is that one of them is Allie who died in childhood and who to that extent can never change ; the other is Phoebe who is as yet insulated by her childhood from the ugly realities of the world and Holden is sometimes harrowed by the sickening realization that she too may be defiled ; at least that soon she will have to confront it.

Of course, Holden is not at all aware of his rôle as champion of innocence ; in fact he regards himself as a pretty depraved person, and at no time blames others for his failure to adjust himself to life. When he does expose hidden yearnings of his soul he does so only in glimpses and always under protest. But occasionally we are given moments of most revealing lucidity as when we catch him off guard, arguing with Phoebe. With childish insistence she demands to know what he intends making of

his life, what he intends to be. Feeling he must answer her, he casts around desperately for some reply, but all he can think of is a little boy he has seen that day walking along gaily in the roadway, ignored by his parents as the cars whizzed by and singing happily if inaccurately.

'If a body catch a body coming through the Rye'

and he breaks into the following gauche, clumsy, but strangely beautiful allegory of his vocation in life ;

> Anyway,—I keep picturing all those little kids playing some game in this big field of rye and all. Thousands of little kids, and nobody's around—nobody big, I mean—except me. And I'm standing on the edge of some crazy cliff. What I have to do, I have to catch everybody if they start to go over the cliff—I mean if they're running and they don't look where they're going I have to come from somewhere and *catch* them. That's all I'd do all day. I'd just be a catcher in the rye and all. I know it's crazy, but that's the only thing I'd really like to be. I know it's crazy !

A passage such as this makes it easy for us to see why Salinger is so pre-occupied with childhood, and consequently why he can depict it so well. (Philip Toynbee has written of him that 'he seems to understand children as no English-speaking writer has done since Lewis Carroll'.) The child, for him represents the last precarious stronghold of innocence and sincerity in his hollow 'phoney' world.

It is important to understand one other central facet of Holden Caulfield's character. It has been described in a very penetrating comment by John Middleton Murry as generosity in literature. It is fundamentally the quality of being angry and sinning not. The hero's anger is directed throughout the novel at a thousand deserving objects. But it never degenerates into hatred, nor does it ever betray him to self-pity. He never blames society or people for his own apparent inadequacy, and he is as quick to forgive as to condemn. As Middleton-Murry puts it, 'though he has to think evil of some of the people with whom he collides, he cannot remember it. The phoneyness of the phoneys "phoney" is his key word—has to be forgiven.'

He has his ideal, he is in search of his kingdom, and though we feel that the society he lives in holds out little hope of success, we feel just as strongly that he will never give up his quest. This is where Salinger differs essentially from other young men in whom anger with society is evident, such as Mr John Osborne. The anger of Jimmy Porter is dry and arid and purposeless by comparison with Holden Caulfield's. It holds out no hope of remedy, affirms no faith in human integrity,—in the possibility of personal holiness. George Dillon and Archie Lee are bent and broken by a hostile society and they capitulate. But though Holden Caulfield reaches nervous break-down, his faith is still intact; he is still a 'Catcher in the Rye'.

In attempting to analyse the serious, almost tragic core of this novel I have been forced to neglect many of its other aspects, especially what Miss Elizabeth Bowen describes as its ' enchantingly comic sheath '. But before I move on to discuss his short stories, I should like to quote a comment from Fr Boyle, S.J., in a recent article in ' *America* ' on ' Teaching " Dirty " Books in College ', where he devotes to Salinger one interesting sentence affirming the social validity of his vision.

> J. D. Salinger's book, *Catcher in the Rye,* a study of an idealistic boy in a confused, pharasaical civilization—like, but so much less than Joyce's revelation of a civilization as it existed and operated in the loveless frustrated soul of Stephen Dedalus—expresses a vision which American boys cannot fail to find more profoundly familiar, revealing and deeply moving than they can ever again find that of *Tom Sawyer* to be.

* * *

Many of the themes of *Catcher in the Rye* are extended into the nine stories that go to make up *For Esme with Love and Squalor.* Here the recurrent figure is the sensitive enigmatic young man, who is really Holden Caulfield grown up into a tormented and precarious manhood. The war has intervened and its cruelty and callousness have served only to aggravate the nervous sensitivity of the hero. Society has not changed and he has not come any nearer a compromise with it. The three stories in which this maladjusted young man—whom we cannot help identifying with the author—appears, are the title story, ' A Perfect Day for Banana Fish ' and ' Before the War with the Esquimos '. It will be sufficient for our purpose to deal with the first.

' For Esme with Love and Squalor ' is easily the most powerful story in the book. A young American soldier who calls himself Staff-Sergeant X is stationed in England where he has a chance encounter with an English child, Esme. She is an intense and very appealing child who has already known something of loneliness and pain, due to the estrangement of her parents. She learns from him that he is a writer, and asks him as a special favour to write a story specially for her, preferably a story about ' squalor '. She promises to correspond with him throughout the war. As she leaves him, in her prim childish manner she hopes that he will come through the war ' with all his faculties intact '.

When we next see him, he has come to the ' squalid or moving part of the story '. He is based in a house in Bavaria, the war is over and he has not come through it with all his faculties intact. He is a nervous wreck, harrowed by the war and the stupid blind cruelty it has unleashed even in his comrades. Holden Caulfield's humour is still there, but it has taken on a bitter astringency. As customary with Salinger, the bulk of the story is conveyed through dialogue of which the following extract

is a significant sample. His messmate, Clay, has recently shot a cat on the bonnet of his jeep. He has written to his girl-friend in America about it and insists on discussing it with X, despite repeated repulses :

> ' Yes—don't start that business about the cat again, Clay, God damn it, I don't want to hear about it.'
>
> ' No, all I mean is, I wrote to Loretta about it. She and the whole psychology class discussed it. The goddam professor and everybody.'
>
> ' That's fine, I don't want to hear about it, Clay.'
>
> ' No, you know the reason why I took that pot-shot at it, Loretta says ? She says I was temporarily insane. No kidding. From the shelling and all.'
>
> X threaded his fingers, once, through his dirty hair and shielded his eyes against the light again. ' You weren't insane. You were simply doing your duty. You killed that pussy cat in as manly a way as anyone could've in the circumstances.'
>
> Clay looked at him suspiciously. ' What the hell are you talking about ? '
>
> ' That cat was a spy. You *had* to take a pot-shot at it. It was a clever German midget dressed up in a cheap fur coat. So there was absolutely nothing brutal, or cruel, or dirty, or even—
>
> ' God damn it ! ' Clay said, his lips thinned. ' Can't you ever be *sincere* ? '

The Salinger enigma is still there, but fatigue and tension has given it a more tortured twist. Apart from this, the above extract exemplifies one of Salinger's favourite techniques in characterization. He selects an ordinary detail or instance and almost miraculously imbues it with significance, making it yield up extraordinary insights and intuitions for the reader. Here the instance of the cat not only highlights the horror of the war but also vividly counterpoints and defines the two characters involved. To return to the story, X, in the midst of his anguish gets his only solace from Esme's ingenuous letters with their sincere good wishes for him.

The world of childhood still has its consolation for him. But counter to this world comes an even more formidable force. When he returns to his wife in America and the war is well over, he gets an invitation to Esme's wedding.

> I thought it might be just possible for me to make the trip abroad, expenses be hanged. However, I've since discussed the matter with my wife, a breath-takingly level-headed girl, and we've decided against it.

This type of ' breath-takingly level-headed girl ' is found in Salinger in various flimsy disguises. She is really an extension of Sally—' queen of the phonies '—who occupies an interesting episode in *Catcher in the*

Rye, and she appears again in ' A Perfect Day for Banana fish ', where she fails to realize that her war-shattered husband, is on the point of committing suicide, which he does.

As a type it is hard to define her or to trace the actual causes of her failure, if indeed the failure can be justly ascribed to her. But she is painted as a force inimical to the spontaneous world of childhood ; she is cold, practical and unconsciously selfish. She stands as the symbol of the rigid unnaturalness of American society, inaccessible to enthusiasm or warmth or perhaps even love.

In these three pivotal stories the hero gives us much less of himself than Holden Caulfield did. He has become essentially an outsider in society ; not just in the fashionable sense as expressed by Osborne, or on a lesser level by the late James Dean, nor again is he the facile thesis outsider of Mr Colin Wilson. His ancestry goes back at least as far as Hamlet, who suffered—of course, on a higher tragic level—from a similar melancholy, morbidness, impotence and sense of estrangement from the society of his fellowmen, combined with an emphatic artistic sensibility.

It is a fuller and better articulated outsider than that of Camus, and yet it has much in common with all the anti-social heroes that populate the pages of modern novelists.

* * *

So far the works I have dealt with have been haunted by biographical overtones. None of these stories could have gained their fierce scorching intensity from any detached observer's level. One is immediately tempted to connect this fact with Salinger's small output, and wonder if this autobiographical quality is not a limiting factor on his creative powers. Here is a point of difference with Scott FitzGerald who, though writing about society and people very close to his own personal condition, could nevertheless withdraw to that superb vantage point of artistic detachment and portray both with unwavering objectivity. The tragedy of Dick Diver was surely as close to his own personal tragedy as Holden Caulfield's is to Salinger, yet Dick Diver is portrayed with an almost clinical detachment. It will be therefore interesting to examine a fine story in this book wherein his recurrent hero does not appear and which has as its material the evening's conversation of two young women. The story is called ' Uncle Wiggily in Connecticut ' ; Mary Jane is visiting at the house of her old college friend Eloise, who is married, and in a mood of rather bitter reminiscence they are slowly getting drunk as the evening progresses. Salinger simply records the dialogue and describes their actions and thus without one interruption or comment gradually exposes the dismal failure of Eloise's marriage. In the course of conversation her

daughter Ramona wanders in ; an ugly little child who, out of the loneliness of a childless neighbourhood, and the coldness of her mother has invented a companion, a beau, called Jimmy Jimerreno. Ramona is sent off to get supper from the maid and the friends go on with their conversation which has come round to Eloise's husband. Mary Jane is speaking :

> ' You can't call Lew unintelligent,' she said aloud.
>
> ' Who can't ? '
>
> ' I mean, isn't he intelligent ? ' Mary Jane said innocently.
>
> ' Oh,' said Eloise, ' what's the use in talking. Let's drop it. I'll just depress you. Shut me up.'
>
> ' Well wudja marry him for then ? ' Mary Jane said.
>
> ' Oh, God ! I don't know. He told me he loved Jane Austen. He told me her books meant a great deal to him. That's exactly what he said. I found out later, after we were married, that he hadn't read *one* of her books. You know who his favourite author is ? '
>
> Mary Jane shook her head.
>
> ' L. Manning Vines. Ever heard of him ? '
>
> ' Uh-uh '
>
> ' Neither did I. Neither did anyone else. He wrote a book about Alaska. Lew doesn't remember the name of it but it's the most beautifully *written* book he ever read. Christ ! He isn't even honest enough to come right out and say he liked it because it was about four guys that starved to death in an igloo or something. He has to say it was beautifully *written.*'
>
> ' You're too critical ', Mary Jane said. ' I mean you're too critical, Maybe it was good.'
>
> ' Take my word for it, it couldn't have been ', Eloise said. She thought for a moment, then added, ' At least you have a job. I mean at least you—'

And so the conversation and the drinking goes on. Even this extract demonstrates Salinger's uncanny skill with pithy economical dialogue.

Note how brilliantly the offstage character of Lew, the husband, is evoked by the shrewdly chosen detail of the book he has read.

At the end of the night Eloise in a torment of remorse goes up to visit Ramona who has gone lonely to bed touchingly comforted by her imaginary beau. When she returns to Mary Jane, Eloise is in a state of maudlin regret and unhappiness, and again Salinger gives her the apparently banal but fundamentally profound and meaningful remark that brings the story to its painful conclusion :

> ' Mary Jane, listen please,' Eloise said sobbing. ' You remember our freshman year, and I had that brown and yellow dress I bought in Boise, and Marion Ball told me nobody wore those kind of dresses in New York, and I cried all night ? ' Eloise shook Mary Jane's arm. ' I was a nice girl, then,' she pleaded, ' wasn't I ? '

It is a superb story ; it is apparently objective, it concerns characters manifestly unidentifiable with the author and yet has it not a familiar ring ? Here again is the individual trapped by an unhappy marriage, the yearning after an earlier and more innocent state. And again, re-echoed in an entirely different context is a central conviction of Staff-Sergeant X, Dostoevski's thunderous assertion.

> Fathers and teachers I ponder, ' What is Hell ? ' I maintain that it is the suffering of being unable to love.

This is the central theme that lies at the core of the whole sombre world of these short stories. It is ramified by such externals as the war, the hypocrisy of society, the cruelty of fate and circumstance, but it ultimately resides in this breakdown in human relationships that is almost an obsession with the author.

It is only when he returns to the world of children that this sombreness lifts and light pours in again. Both ' The Laughing Man ' and ' Down at the Dinghy ' concerns children in all their grave, wistful elation, and we again feel the surge of joy and energy that gave such power and poignancy to *The Catcher in the Rye*. And, again, it is obvious why Salinger is so eloquent and penetrating when he describes children. They represent a human condition, which for him—at least temporarily—has vanished from all other areas of American life. They are sincere and direct in their relationships, they have not sold out to the hollowness of social convention and they are still accessible to joy and wonder and love. His tormented heroes find in them a personification of all spiritual values that the corrosive pressures of society have wrested from the adult. And yet though his view of childhood is so deeply felt and so personal, and though he portrays the child with exquisite tenderness, he never sentimentalizes him; he sees him in all the reality of his grave, joyful vulnerable, innocence.

It will be interesting to see Salinger's next book, and observe what turn his spiritual consciousness will take. One hopes that he will go further outside himself for his themes, and in particular give fitting play to his magnificent comic genius. Otherwise it is hard to see how he will avoid repeating himself, however eloquent and intense that repetition may be.

But, if he were never to write another line, his place in American fiction is assured by these brilliant books. They have a merit over and above the immediately artistic for they embody a message as surely as the works of Dante and Langland did.

The message is as simple as it is eternal and it gains strength and authority in being articulated from the midst of a world stifled by materialism and a literature obsessed with sin. They affirm in the profane terms of their environment that there is in man something godlike, an innocence that is indestructible, and that this innocence is just as real as sin.

Book Reviews

THE GALLOPING TROIKA

PORTRAITS OF RUSSIAN PERSONALITIES BETWEEN REFORM AND REVOLUTION. By Richard Hare. London : Oxford University Press. 1959. pp. 360, viii. 42s.

SAFE CONDUCT : An Early Autobiography and other works. By Boris Pasternak. Translated by Alec Brown. Five lyric poems translated by Lydia Pasternak-Slater. London : Elek Books. 1959. pp. 304. 15s.

> ' And you, Russia of mine—are you not also speeding like a *troika* which nought can overtake ? . . . What does that awe-inspiring progress of yours foretell ? What is the unknown force which lies within your mysterious steeds ? . . . Whither, then, are you speeding, O Russia of mine ? Whither ? '
>
> (NIKOLAI GOGOL : Dead Souls)

GOGOL's galloping *troika* is nineteenth century Russia, its literature and ideas, its turbulent craving for freedom and for salvation, its fervent messianism. Stirred into activity by Pushkin and Lermontov, the *troika* plunges forward, bearing with it the gentle revolutionaries of December 1825, Gogol himself, the radical propagandists, Bielinsky and Herzen, the novelists, Turgenev, Tolstoy and Dostoevsky, the mystics and the philosophers, the poets, the atheists and the anarchists, the Slavophils and the *narodniks,* and all those clamouring searchers for truth, those great excitable hearts whose nature is so enigmatic and bewildering to us foreigners.

Can we hope, even now, to solve Gogol's riddle ? Can we divine what hidden force drove his *troika* on its headlong way ? The books under review are of particular relevance to this problem, the one as a guide to the ideals and aspirations that underlay nineteenth century Russian thought, the other, a collection of early writings by a poet who is the direct descendant of the great Russians, and apparently the only one alive today who retains their high idealism and artistic integrity.

Mr Hare's book deals with the latter half of the nineteenth century, roughly from the reforms of Alexander II in the early eighteen sixties, to the Revolution of 1917, a period when the *troika* was in full flight, when Russian literature reached its greatest heights in the novels of Tolstoy and Dostoevsky. Because so many Germans, Frenchmen and Englishmen have commented on the Russian writers—and some of them, let it be added, very percipiently—we in the West may feel that we understand Russian literature, have succeeded in classifying it in its appropriate category. We may be unaware of the fundamental difference between that literature and our own. ' It is necessary ',

says Berdyaev, ' to bring to bear upon Russia the theological virtues of faith, hope and charity in order to comprehend her '.[1] He warns us that in Russian literature and ideals we are dealing with something alien, something entirely outside the Western cultural heritage. The Renaissance did not affect the culture of Russia as it did that of the West. In fact, culture as we understand it in Europe was unknown in Russia :

> The great Russian writers of the nineteenth century created not from the joy of creative abundance, but from a thirst for the salvation of the people, of humanity and the whole world, from unhappiness and suffering, from the injustice and slavery of man . . . the fundamental Russia theme will be not the creation of a perfect culture but the creation of a better life. [2]

Professor A. Brüchner comments in almost identical terms. Speaking of the intelligent Russian, he says : ' He expected and demanded of his country's literature not merely aesthetic recreation : he placed it at the service of everything noble and good, of his aspirations of the enlightenment and emancipation of the spirit '. [3] Prince Kropotkin has the same to say : ' . . . the best minds of the country have chosen the poem, the novel, the satire or literary criticism as the medium for expressing their aspirations, their conception of national life, or their ideals '.[4]

There is to the Western mind something suspect here. The defenders of Nabokov (ironically enough, a Russian) see in Art their highest ideal. Living in a spiritually disintegrated world, when more and more emphasis is placed on scientific organization, and when more pressure than ever before is being brought to bear upon the artist to conform, they have insisted above all else on the integrity of the artist, even if it results, as it did in the case of Kafka and Joyce, in the dichotomy between the artist and the man. Fearful of the contamination of life, they have posed a separate standard for literature. A beautifully described murder or seduction of a little child may be judged on its artistic merits alone. It would be silly to suggest that all Westerners see the distinction between art and life so sharply, but the distinction is, nevertheless, there. The Graeco-Roman tradition which the European inherited placed a premium on harmony, on logic, on calm rational thought. It emphasized the importance of man and his external achievements, but it paid little attention to his soul. That there was a darker side to the Greek tradition is evidenced by the myths of Dionysus and of Demeter and Persephone ; but when Graecism was revived during the Renaissance, it was the classical beauty of Apollo that appealed to men's minds. The Dionysian current remained, but rather as an underground stream which emerged to the surface at but rare intervals in the history of European literature. Russia, which was Christianized by the Eastern Schismatic Church, knew nothing of the Roman influence which in the West modified Greek

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[1] Berdyaev, N. : The Russian Idea, translated from the Russian by R. M. French (London 1947) p. 1.

[2] Berdyaev, N. : op. cit. p. 25

[3] Bruchner, A. : A Literary History of Russia, edited by Ellis H, Minns, M.A. and translated from the German by H. Havelock, M.A. (London 1908) p. 2.

[4] Kropotkin, P. : Russian Literature : Ideals and Realities. (London 1916) p. xi.

thought and emphasized the rational as against the instinctive in man. It was Dionysiac Greece that Russia took to her heart. Her writers, imbued with this dark spirit, valued the instinctive life above all else. It is for this reason that the civilized European is appalled by the Russians. His great humanist traditions are thrust aside, treated as if they never existed. With Virginia Woolf he feels that ' to brush aside civilisation and plunge into the depths of the soul is not really to enrich '.[1] Here is the reason why Dostoevsky and Tolstoy, the former especially, have aroused such violent antipathies in the breasts of Western critics. But, as even in the West there are men who are deeply conscious of the soul, there is equally impassioned partisanship of these writers.

Mr Richard Hare, who is a lecturer at the School of Slavonic and East European Studies, London University, belongs to the first category of critics. In tracing the current of ideas in nineteenth century Russia he selects fifteen personalities, and indicates their position in the stream, as he sees it. He devotes the largest space to Tolstoy. Turgenev and Dostoevsky, and the anarchist, Michael Bakunin are dealt with at length. Smaller chapters are devoted to the conservative, A. V. Nikitenko and the anarchist, Prince Peter Kropotkin. More summary treatment is given the *narodniks,* N. Mikhailovsky, P. Lavrov and Lev. Tikhimirov ; the philosophers, V. Solovyov, N. F. Fyodorov and V. V. Rozanov ; and the statesmen, K. Pobyedonostsev, Count Sergei Vitte and P. Stolypin. Despite some omissions, (the novelist, Merezhkovsky and the Symbolists, Blok, Byelii and Ivanov are not mentioned) it is, in all, a fairly representative group, and in a medium-sized book of this nature one could not expect much more.

It is when dealing with the politico-economic aspects of Russian thought that Mr Hare is at his best. On the more philosophical level his book lacks the authority of Nicolas Berdyaev's *The Russian Idea* which covers more or less the same ground. Mr Hare dislikes Christianity, and his bias prevents him from realizing that it is impossible to arrive at any kind of an understanding of Russian ideas unless we appreciate that they grow out of religious roots. Berdyaev has pointed out that ' it is characteristic of Russian thought in the nineteenth century that the non-religious tendencies of the Russians, the socialism, *narodnichestvo,* anarchism, nihilism, and even our atheism has a religious theme, and that religious *pathos* entered into their experience. Dostoevsky understood this admirably. He says that Russian socialism is a question of God and godlessness. Revolution was a religious matter to the revolutionary Intelligentsia '.[2] Ivan Karamazov talking to Alyosha in the tavern, broods over the eternal questions of young Russia :

> In this stinking tavern, for instance, here, they meet and sit down in a corner. They've never met in their lives before, and they won't meet again for forty years. And what do they talk about in that momentary halt in the tavern ? Of the eternal questions, of the existence of God and immortality. And those that do not believe in God talk of socialism or anarchism, of the transformation of all humanity on a new

[1] Woolf, Virginia : Granite and Rainbow. (London 1958) p. 128
[2] Berdyaev, N. : op. cit. p. 128

pattern, so that it all comes to the same, they're the same questions turned inside out. And masses, masses of the most original Russian boys do nothing but talk of the eternal questions ! Isn't that so ? '[1]

One recalls the story of the atheist, Bielinsky who turned on a companion who had interrupted a discussion by suggesting that the time had come for a meal, and thundered : ' We have not yet decided on the existence of God, and you want to eat ! '

This failure or unwillingness to recognize the religious nature of Russian thought renders Mr Hare incapable of discussing Dostoevsky with any degree of authority. His estimate of *The Idiot* is exasperating. For three pages he paints a picture of a chaotic ill-conceived work, and then concludes with the remark : ' Apart from that, ' The Idiot ' remains a masterpiece of literary art, for its chaos is shot through with an epic grandeur and clarity which can never be grasped by a hasty or superficial reader '.[2] If this is not merely a hasty genuflection to good critics like Allen Tate who has spoken of the profundity of insight into human motives manifested in the novel, would Mr Hare not have been better occupied by examining and elucidating the grandeur and clarity to which he refers ? Nor is his interpretation of the other great novels any more satisfactory. In his misgivings concerning Dostoevsky, Mr Hare feels quite certain that he has the critical opinion of the world behind him :

> During the last two decades, however, signs have multiplied to show that the previous generation's almost ecstatic attitude to Dostoevsky is well on the wane, where it has not disappeared and given place to violent critical apathy.[3]

No attempt is made to substantiate this sweeping generalization. The fact is that there have always been those who were violently antipathetic to this most Russian of writers, just as there have been ecstatic supporters of him.

Even in his discussion of Tolstoy, Mr Hare cannot resist attacking Dostoevsky. Speaking of *Anna Karenina*, he says : —

> Dostoevsky, in his well-known article about the novel, rejoiced that it confirmed his pet belief in the basic depravity of human beings, and that it proved how abnormality and crime spring from the depths of human nature, and are rooted far deeper ' than out socialist doctors can ever diagnose '. He saw Tolstoy in his own strong distorting mirror, and had no desire to see him otherwise.[4]

Normally this remark could be dismissed as mere querulousness on the part of the critic, but as Dostoevsky's words are important towards understanding the deeper levels of Russian thought, it may be instructive to quote what he actually did say :

> However, in the Russian author's approach to culpability and human delinquency it is clearly revealed that no ant-hill, no triumph

[1] Dostoevsky, F. M. : The Brothers Karamazov, translated from the Russian by Constance Garnett (Everyman's Library) vol 1 p. 238

[2] Hare, Richard : Portraits of Russian Personalities between Reform and Revolution (London 1959) p. 129

[3] Hare, Richard : op. cit. p. 105

[4] Hare, Richard : op. cit. 206

> of 'the fourth estate', no elimination of poverty, no organization of labour will save mankind from abnormality, and therefore—from guilt and criminality. This is expressed in an immense psychological analysis of the human soul, with tremendous depth and potency, with a realism of artistic portrayal hitherto unknown in Russia. It is clear and intelligible to the point of obviousness that evil in mankind is concealed deeper than the physician-socialists suppose; that in no organisation of society can evil be eliminated; that the human soul will remain identical; that abnormality and sin emanate from the soul itself, and finally, that the laws of the human spirit are unknown to science, so obscure, so indeterminate and mysterious, that, as yet, there can neither be physicians nor final judges, but that there is only He who saith: 'Vengeance belongeth unto me; I will recompense'. He alone knows the *whole* mystery of the world and man's ultimate destiny'.[1]

Surely no Christian could disagree with these remarks. Even the most impercipient non-Christian of today must realize that the illusions of Rousseau and Diderot have been shattered, and that evil exists in man himself and cannot be eliminated by a sociological approach. Far from seeing Tolstoy in a distorting mirror, Dostovesky understood his great contemporary as few others did. Tolstoy's friend, Paul Birukoff has said that Dostoevsky was the only one of the literary critics who understood *Anna Karenina*.[2]

It was Dostoevsky's realization that no organization of society, no ant-hill would absolve mankind from evil and guilt which made him such a profound critic of the socialists. To Dostoevsky nothing was more important than the ideal of freedom, even if it meant the freedom to do evil. He could see no merit in men who were good through force or compulsion. Man must choose himself between good and evil. To have his choice dictated to him, to be prevented from doing something which was not in his own best interests by another person or group of people was to him the worst of tyrannies. That is why he attacked even the idealistic socialists of the reform period, and, because he did not understand Catholicism and saw it as a kind of spiritual despotism, why he was also so violently anti-Catholic. His anti-Catholicism, indeed, aroused the holy wrath of Claudel: 'When Dostoevsky dares to put up his melancholy Orthodox Church (which, by the way, occupies so large a place in his work) against the Church of God, he lays it open, after all, to some crushing comparisons'.[3] Catholics, however, can afford to be a little less fiery than Claudel who, whatever about his great talents, would hardly have made a good oecumenicist. Fr Henri de Lubac is more just:

> Dostoevsky's type of genius is at once profoundly human (let us avoid the word 'humanist' which is ambiguous) and profoundly Christian; he is human *because* he is Christian. Whatever may be thought of his 'orthodoxy', which is doubly in question, the thing can

[1] Dostoevsky F. M.: The Diary of a Writer, translated and annotated by Boris Brasol (New York 1949) Vol II p. 787

[2] Birukoff, Paul: The Life of Tolstoy (London 1911) p. 84

[3] see The correspondence between Paul Claudel and André Gide translated by John Russell (London 1952) p. 223

hardly be denied. His Christianity is genuine ; it is, at bottom, the Christianity of the Gospel, and it is this Christianity which, reaching beyond his great gifts as a psychologist, lends so much depth to his vision of man '[1]

If Dostoevsky insisted on man's freedom, he also insisted on the guilt of man and on his responsibility to God, and God alone. ' If God does not exist, then all is permitted '. His great novels are all variations on the theme of evil and guilt, of the struggle of man against God, and of his striving towards Him. ' Even in Europe ', he says of *The Brothers Karamazov,* ' there have never been atheistic expressions of such power. Consequently, I do not believe in Christ and His confession as a child, but my hosanna has come through a great furnace of doubt '.[2]

There is a strongly messianic element in Dostoevsky. He called the Russians a ' God-bearing ' people, and saw in the Orthodox Church the salvation of the world. His friend, Vladimir Solovyov, also believed in the ' God-bearing ' Russians, but, unlike Dostoevsky, was not a fanatic Slavophil, and was critical of the Orthodox Church which he considered too subservient to the secular power. Solovyov was a very Russian figure who appears to have been little considered in the West. Mr Hare is probably correct when he says that interest in him is now confined to ' neo-Christian ' commentators. There is much that is extravagant in Solovyov, and his writings (*La Russie et l'Eglise Universelle*, *The Story of Anti-Christ*, and *Three Conversations,* for instance) are so diffuse and, at times, so full of local polemics that they repel the Western reader. To the scholar these are important books, but the ordinary educated person, the ' common reader ' is content to know Solovyov at secondhand, through Mr Hare, for example. This is a pity, for any writer must lose his essential quality when strained through another man's mind. The reader who takes his impression of Solovyov from Mr Hare is in an unfortunate position because, as in the case of Dostoevsky, the author's anti-Christian bias renders his interpretation singularly inept. Summing up on the philosopher, Mr Hare has this to say : ' Towards the end fresh conclusions caused him to reject wholeheartedly all the theological objectives which had been sacred to him in his youth '.[3] What Solovyov's youthful theological objectives were is not made very clear. In fact, during his youth Solovyov passed through a stage of violent atheism, and it was in his early manhood and later maturity that he became deeply religious-minded. It is perhaps his *theocratic* ideas to which Mr Hare refers. Solovyov envisaged a reunion of the Eastern Church and the Roman Catholic Church, and believed that a world-wide theocracy could thus be established which would bring peace and happiness to mankind. His theocratic state, founded on Christian love, would achieve the earthly Paradise which the socialist-materialists could never reach. Towards the end of his life he did, indeed, become disillusioned about this theocratic idea, but for reasons more profound than Mr Hare is prepared to consider : ' When he finally awoke to the practical futility of

[1] Lubac, H de, S.J. : The Drama of Atheist Humanism translated from the French by Edith M. Riley (London 1949) p. 187

[2] see Simmons, E. J. : Dostoevsky : The Making of a Novelist (London 1949) p. 294

[3] Hare, Richard : op. cit. p. 272

grandiose theocratic plans to fuse established churches with existing nation states, the modern survival of the old historic Christian drama, together with the institutions which revolved around it, sunk into an irrelevant puppet-show for him '.[1] If Solovyov abandoned his idea of a theocratic utopia, it was because he felt that a utopia, even a theocratic one, is an impossible dream for sinful man, and that its realization would be a negation of the high ideal which brought it into being. The Kingdom of God is not of this earth.

The socialist-utopians do not appear to have had such doubts about their ideal state. The anarchist Michael Bakunin, though there was much that was wild and extravagant in his character, was animated by a passionate love for the people. He was, Mr Hare tells us, the first Russian to conceive social revolution in cosmic terms and on an international plane.

Bakunin was a nobleman, an officer of the imperial Guards in Poland. He resigned from the Guards in protest against tsarist methods, and spent the next few years wandering about Europe. In 1848 he took part in the Paris rebellion, and a year later he was behind the barricades in Dresden. Something of his quixotic character may be gathered from his proposal that the Dresden revolutionaries should set up Raphael's ' Madonna ' before their barricades, in the belief that the army would not bring itself to fire on it. With the collapse of the Dresden rebellion, Bakunin was arrested by the state police. Later, he was handed over to the Russian authorities, who imprisoned him in the Peter and Paul Fortress in Petersburg. Here he was approached by the Tsar's aide-de-camp, Count Orlov, who brought a message from Nicholas I, telling him to write a full confession of his sins, as if he were an erring son appealing to his father, rather than a criminal to a judge. While all police like to get their hands on a criminal's confession, the desire for one on the part of the Russian rulers seems always to have been obsessive. Nicholas was not content to have Bakunin proved guilty by the normal legal procedures, he wanted an abject confession from the culprit himself, the ' son ' who had spurned the goodness of the father-tsar. The novelist, Merezhkovsky in his story of the Decembrist rebellion, *December the Fourteenth* describes a similar scene when the revolutionary, Ryleyev breaks down and babbles all to his ' spiritual father ', the tsar. Like Ryleyev, Bakunin grovels abjectly at the tsar's feet and confesses all. Did Stalin and his successors, too, need this submission, this assurance demanded by the hard father who is ' cruel, only to be kind ' that his wayward children love him and see in him their only authority ; and were those communists who confessed to deviations from the party line, like Ryleyev and Bakunin, so desperately bound to their father-figure that, momentarily, at all events, they were overcome with their own guilt?

I have not read Bakunin's ' Confession ', but, judging by Mr Hare's account it is a document of extraordinary interest. ' I believe that in Russia, more than anywhere else ', he says in the course of it, ' a dictatorial power is indispensible, to raise up and educate the masses—a power free in its own choice of direction but unimpeded by parliaments, and surrounded by people

[1] Hare, Richard : op. cit. p. 277

who have faith in it'. This thought is echoed by almost all the thinkers of nineteenth century Russia. Horrified by the spectacle of the ruthless autocracy of tsardom, they yet saw that their revolutionary dream, their utopia, while it might bring bread and comfort to the people, would not result in freedom. Unlike Dostoevsky and Solovyov, they were content to abandon freedom for bread.

Coming to Pasternak after the turmoil of the nineteenth century is like entering a quiet grove, secluded from the noise and clamour of the world. Pasternak found his models not in Dostoevsky or Tolstoy, or even Turgenev, but in Pushkin and in Chekhov. Dr. Zhivago speaks for his author when he notes in his diary:

> What I have come to like best in the whole of Russian literature is the childlike Russian quality of Pushkin and Chekhov, their shy unconcern with such high-sounding matters as the ultimate purpose of mankind or their own salvation. It isn't that they didn't think about these things, and to good effect, but they always felt that such important matters were not for them. While Gogol, Tolstoy and Dostoyevsky worried and looked for the meaning of life and prepared for death and drew up balance-sheets, these two were distracted, right up to the end of their lives, by the current, individual tasks imposed on them by their vocations as writers, and in the course of fulfilling these tasks they lived their lives, quietly, treating both their lives and their work as private, individual matters, of no concern to anyone else. And these individual things have since become the concern of all, their work has ripened of itself, like apples picked green from the trees, and has increasingly matured in sense and sweetness. [1]

Chekhov and Pushkin did not lead such quiet, sedentary lives as one might gather from Pasternak, but in the truest sense what he says of them is correct. The ideal he has of them is obviously that which has guided his own actions. The fact that now he is not allowed to treat his life and work as a private, individual matter, that he has been dragged willy-nilly into the political maelstrom is the essence of his peculiar tragedy. What the publicists of the West do not seem to realize is that they are outraging Pasternak's sensitive spirit no less surely than his Communist masters.

The early biography and the four short stories included in the present volume are not being introduced to English readers for the first time. This was done, I believe, in 1945 when Lindsay Drummond Ltd. published Stefan Schimanski's collection of Pasternak's prose works. Schimanski's introduction to that book is the best essay on Pasternak that I have read, and I must acknowledge my deep indebtedness to it.

The reader who encountered Pasternak first in *Dr Zhivago* will be puzzled in the extreme by these early works, one of them—*Zhenia's Childhood*—written during the first world war. They are very difficult, and it is necessary to read them again and again before anything of their beauty unfolds itself.

[1] Pasternak, Boris: Dr. Zhivago translated from the Russian by Max Hayward and Manya Harai (London 1958) p. 259

As Schimanski has said, Pasternak is intense to breaking point, his sentences, even single words could be said to be too heavily laden with meaning. ' In Pasternak hardly a line is superfluous (in fact his economy makes it difficult to follow him) or devoid of personal experience '.[1] It will be gathered from this that Pasternak's prose is really poetry, and that it will benefit from being read slowly and aloud. But this is only part of the explanation. The real difficulty lies in his manner of presenting his story. The normal story-teller, even a Henry James, is at pains to present the facts of his story lucidly ; his comment, implied or explicit, is superadded to the prosaic facts. In Pasternak's stories the facts are exasperatingly absent, or present only in momentary flashes. The stories are like beautiful and subtle commentaries on pictures which the reader has not seen and can only guess at by pondering over the commentaries. Schimanski analyses the problem brilliantly :

> But what makes Pasternak so unique, and also so difficult, is his approach to this subject. For his attention is focussed, not so much on the object as on its reflection, and even beyond it, on the very process of reflection itself . . . It is as if a mirror had been placed on the other side of "things" to illuminate the background, and to show the hidden side of life, the darkness of the soul, so that the light is reflected from it on to the more obvious facets of living.[2]

It is hardly necessary to draw attention to the fact that Pasternak was writing his early poetry and prose before and during the early years of the Russian Revolution, a time when tremendous pressure was brought to bear upon the artist to direct his energies towards the furtherance of the revolutionary ideal. The greatest of Russian writers had, during the past hundred years, concentrated their talents on freeing the people from the brutal tyranny of the tsars, on abolishing cruelty and injustice. Now the millenium had come, and the temptation to herald it was great. Pasternak refused this temptation, he refused to surrender his integrity as an artist, he refused to be a ' mouthpiece of the Revolution ' or ' trumpeteer of the new age '. Unlike Blok and his other mighty contemporary Mayakovsky, he did not feel bound to proclaim that Russia was living through an epoch which had had few others to equal it in grandeur. He believed that his life and his work were private things, and he shunned the crowd. The fact that he was so driven into himself explains much of the obscurity of the early Pasternak. But, although obscure and difficult, these stories are not the work of an affected ' coterie ' author, hiding his lack of thought and imagination in riddles. There is depth and beauty here that reveals itself slowly to the patient reader.

Joseph F. Reynolds

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[1] Schimanski, S. : Introduction to Collected Prose Works of Boris Pasternak (London 1945) p. 40

[2] Schimanski, S. : op. cit. p. 20

THE ACHIEVEMENT OF T. S. ELIOT. An Essay on the Nature of Poetry. By F. O. Matthiessen. London : Oxford University Press. 1958. Pp. 248. 25s.

THE BUSINESS OF CRITICISM. By Helen Gardner. Oxford : at the Clarendon Press. 1959. Pp. 157. 15s.

' The rudiment of criticism ', wrote Mr T. S. Eliot in one of his early essays, ' is the ability to choose a good poem and reject a bad poem ; and its most severe test is of its ability to select a good *new* poem, to respond properly to a new situation '. Probably—as Miss Gardner points out in her latest book—the poem itself needs the twin tests of experience and time before Eliot's dictum can be accepted as an entirely valid assessment of the critic's discernment. This, however, seems certain : Matthiessen's lucid and scholarly essay—which first appeared in 1935—must still be regarded as the most authoritative exposition of Mr Eliot's view of poetry, as well as being one of the most stimulating evaluations of his method and achievement as an artist. This latest (third) edition contains, besides textual revisions to the original work, additional chapters on Eliot's earlier dramas and the *Quartets*—as included in the second edition (1947)—and finally a long chapter by Professor C. L. Barber on Eliot's work in the past decade, particularly *The Cocktail Party* and *The Confidential Clerk*.

Matthiessen's subtitle to his book is boldly assertive—' an Essay on the Nature of Poetry '. This, in 1935, when Eliot's work was only beginning to be widely known. In 1922, the late Professor Middleton Murry published an essay entitled ' The Nature of Poetry ' in which, after the first few pages, he admitted that anything he might write on the nature of poetry would turn out to be speculations on the nature of Shakespeare's poetry, for ' the nature of Shakespeare's poetry is the nature of poetry '. Naive, perhaps ; but surely less naive than Matthiessen's evaluation must have seemed on the appearance of his book in 1935. Yet the preface to the first edition was salutary : ' My double aim in this essay is to evaluate Eliot's method and achievement as an artist, and in so doing to emphasize certain of the fundamental elements in the nature of poetry which are in danger of being obscured by the increasing tendency to treat poetry as a social document and to forget that it is an art. The most widespread error in contemporary criticism is to neglect form and to concern itself entirely with content. The romantic critic is generally not interested in the poet's work, but in finding the man behind it. The humanistic critic and the sociological critic have in common that both tend to ignore the evaluation of specific poems in their preoccupation with the ideological background from which the poems spring. All these concerns have value in expert hands, but only if it is realized that they are not criticism of poetry '. Elementary truisms, perhaps : yet, twenty-five years later, the disquieting tendency of so many critics to try to say the last word, to get, in fact, in the way of the work they are supposed to be assessing, has necessitated Miss Helen Gardner's book *The Business of Criticism*—a sane and trenchant corrective.

How well does Matthiessen's book wear in the light of Eliot's subsequent development ? Excellently, I think. Its organic unity still seems superlative. The reciprocal relevance of Eliot's poetry, criticism and earlier dramas is

well organized, and the first six chapters can still startle in their palpitating involvement in, and luminous projection of, the whole Eliot ethos. The chapter-headings themselves have weathered very well, and still point authoritatively in the right direction : ' Tradition and the Individual Talent ' ; ' The Objective Correlative ' ; ' The Auditory Imagination ' ; ' The Sense of His Own Age ', etc. Above all, however, it is Matthiessen's *style* as a critic which manifests itself so distinctively—vibrant, subtle, poised, piquant, mature. It is not without significance that the fly-leaf bears a quotation from Charles Maurras—' What does the mind enjoy in books ? Either the style or nothing. But someone says, what about the thought ? The thought, that is the style, too '. Admittedly, the earlier thrill of discovery as a new major writer's position was being ordered in its landscape is missing. But then, Matthiessen was far too perceptive a critic to have been merely beguiled—as were so many others—in piecing together the jig-saw that made-up *The Waste Land,* or to have been preoccupied with the earlier Eliot's conceits. Like Miss Gardner, he was aware that *style* is a prime element in giving us a sense that certain writers and works have great value and meaning, in Miss Gardner's words, that ' it is one of the major elements differentiating a poem from a riddle which once it has been guessed has no further power to interest '.

But there are limitations in Matthiessen's book. His chapter on the *Four Quartets* seems pedestrian beside Miss Helen Gardner's brilliant commentary on the poems, or even beside some of the essays by other critics which appeared in B. Rajan's book, *T. S. Eliot : A Study of his Writings by Several Hands* (Dobson, 1947). This is a pity, for to me it seems that it is on the *Quartets* that Eliot's future reputation as a poet is most likely to be assured. It is, of course, foolhardy to prophesy, but they must surely stand as one of the greatest major poems of our time, and the greatest sequence of religious poetry since the seventeenth century.

In an important essay ' The Significance of T. S. Eliot ', which appeared in Neville Braybrooke's (now lamentably defunct) quarterly *The Wind and the Rain* in 1949, Hermann Peschmann quotes Miss Anne Ridler on Eliot's development as a critic and as a poet : ' As a critic, he has kept his preferences, while shedding his prejudices ; as a poet, he had kept his pity and shed his contempt for mankind '. Peschmann agrees that most of Eliot's critical work for the past twenty years is of importance, particularly in its formulation, directly or obliquely for his contemporaries, of his hierarchic, conservative, but perennially *valid* concept of culture as simply ' that which makes life worth living '. But to Peschmann ' there are more things in heaven and earth than can be formulated in critical essays ', and it is in Eliot's later poetry—his ' spiritual progressions from innocence, through experience, to virtue and beatitude, from the first turning of the second purgatorial stair in 'Ash Wednesday' to the summation of ecstasy at the end of 'Little Gidding'—that his significance as a major artist should endure.

In fairness to Matthiessen, let it be admitted that even in the 1935 edition of his book he lamented two most prevalent false views of Eliot—that ' which deplored the movement towards faith of what appeared to them in *The Waste Land* to be the prophet of our disillusion ; and that which deplored his

earlier work as dangerously radical and now welcomed him with hosannas.' But this cannot obliterate the lameness of Matthiessen's later chapter on *The Quartets*. Can it be that he, perhaps, whilst responding to the *form* of the Quartets, failed to respond appropriately to their *absoluteness ?* This is not uncommon, for, as, I think, the late Middleton Murry once pointed out, poetry which seeks to be absolute is of necessity often too abstract and too personal to have a common appeal since it hovers between the condition of being the most perfect poetry of all, and not being poetry at all. This was the stuff of which the poetry of the later Shakespeare was made. And to me it seems that the *Four Quartets* come as far as humanly possible towards being poetry in this ' absolute ' sense—in Eliot's own words (from an essay written in 1933) a ' getting *beyond poetry,* as Beethoven strove in his later works to get *beyond music* '. To appreciate fully poetry of this calibre it is, I believe, necessary both to apprehend and to be in sympathy with its essential theme. This in the *Four Quartets* is not an easy thing, for the theme is *not* simply the meaning of history, or the relation of time to eternity. It is involved with the whole Christian *concept* of time (on which the only sufficiently satisfactory precis I know of for the layman is an essay by Emil Brunner which appeared in Volume VII of *The Wind and the Rain* in 1951). But we can take a short-cut and say that its ' still centre ' is an apprehension, terrifying in its implications, of Love. Eliot's dramas—on which Mr. Matthiessen is certainly inadequate, and, indeed, on which a comprehensive, satisfying analysis is lacking, save for occasional essays by Mr. Hermann Peschmann, or by Dr Denis Donoghue—are not as distinct from his poetry as might be imagined : it would not, I think, be difficult to make a case that *The Family Reunion ; The Cocktail Party ; The Confidential Clerk* and *The Elder Statesman,* have the same respective literal, moral and mystical meanings as their four counterparts in ' Burnt Norton ' ; ' East Coker ' ; ' The Dry Salvages ' and ' Little Gidding '. If so, the work of Eliot must now surely be completed in this final popular dramatic projection of what was previously poetically communicated to the select minority. Then *The Elder Statesman* like *The Tempest* is ' the end of all our exploring ', that is ' to arrive where we started and know the place for the first time '. To anyone who has yet to start, Mr. Matthiessen's book is the best stimulus I know of : to the old explorer it has the familiar comfort of a tried and stimulating travelling companion.

Miss Gardner's book *The Business of Criticism* consists of two sets of lectures. The first set, ' The Profession of a Critic ', was given in the University of London in 1953. The second set ' The Limits of Literary Criticism ' comprised the Riddell Memorial Lectures for 1956. Both are a plea for a more humble approach to literature ; both are essentially a defence of the traditional view of literary criticism ; both, in the last resort, invoke the test of ' the reasonable reader ' in accordance with the Dryden dictum that ' the chiefest part of the business of criticism ' was ' to observe those excellences which should delight a reasonable reader '. The chapters on ' The Historical Approach ', ' Interpretation ' and ' The Historical Sense ' are the most brilliant, but the whole book is an admirable blend of alert, perceptive thought and mellow scholarship.

Miss Gardner's realization of the true *function* of the critic is unequivocally stated: 'The critic or scholar has a different function from that of the artist or original thinker. One of his uses is to help to preserve the creative thought of his own day from provincialism in time, by keeping alive and available to his own age what is neglected or disparaged by those absorbed in the preoccupations of the hour. His humble task is to protect his betters from the corruption of fashions'. And again 'literary criticism must begin by acknowledging its limitations. It can only give us approaches to the meaning, and an approach will be valuable in so far as the critic who employs it is aware of, and sensitive to, the value of other approaches'. But, she reminds us, it is above all important to be humble and objective: 'A mind which is concerned with being right, which is nervously anxious not to be taken in, which sits in judgement, and approaches works of passion and imagination with neatly formulated demands, is inhibited from the receptiveness and disinterestedness which are the conditions of aesthetic experience. To attempt to train young people in this kind of discrimination seems to me to be a folly if not a crime'.

I am quoting somewhat copiously; it is unavoidable. It would be fatuous to turn what purports to be a review of Miss Gardner's book into an analysis of, say, the 'Historical Sense'. It is not without cause that Miss Gardner complains that 'so many contributions to critical journals consist not of studies of a writer or his works, but of considerations of Mr. X's modifications of Mr. Y's criticism of Mr. Z's article. Philip Toynbee in a recent review in the *Observer* also commented on this modern absurdity—'a few years ago I found myself reviewing a critical work on the French critic Charles du Bos, who had himself written a criticism of Pater as a critic'. Hence, I'll confine myself to strongly recommending this wise and valuable book, ending without comment by requoting a passage from James Thurber which Miss Gardner herself quotes in illustration of the intellectual frivolity of much of the New Criticism. (Thurber had been trying without success to learn botany but every earnest adjustment of the microscope had brought him nothing but 'blackness or the familiar lacteal opacity).

> And that time I saw, to my pleasure and amazement, a variegated constellation of flecks, specks and spots. These I hastily drew. The instructor, noting my activity, came back from an adjoining desk, a smile on his lips and his eyebrows high in hope. He looked at my cell drawing. 'What's that?' he demanded, with a hint of a squeal in his voice. 'That's what I saw', I said. 'You didn't, you didn't, you didn't' he screamed, losing control of his temper instantly, and he bent over and squinted into the microscope. His head snapped up. 'That's your eye!' he shouted. 'You've fixed the lens so that it reflects! You've drawn your eye!'[1]

BASIL PAYNE

[1] My Life and Hard Times, Ch. 8.

J. M. SYNGE. 1871–1909. By David H. Greene and Edward M. Stephens. Macmillan. New York. $6.95.

If this were a new volume in a popular French series of biographies it might be called *La Vie Doloureuse de Jean Synge.* For years Maurice Bourgeois' painstaking and readable life, and P. P. Howe's able critical study, have held the field, awaiting something more intimate and expanded. Once at a dinner party Synge's nephew, 'Ned' Stephens, informed me that he was hard at work but in no hurry ; a statement which filled me with immediate despair, for if a non-professional writer says he is in no hurry, you need not expect his book until the Greek Calends. The years went by ; the pages piled up ; publishers saw the immense heap of typescript and faltered ; David Breene was called in as a possible collaborator (he foresaw difficulties) ; and, in 1955, Stephens died suddenly and his widow gave Greene *carte blanche* to use the available material in whatever way he saw fit. He has done so ; and, as he tells himself, all the interpretations and conclusions and actual writing in the book are his. Nevertheless, Stephens is there in the background as the harvester and preserver of all this unpublished material.

Its effect is curious. It leaves at least one reviewer feeling that Shakespeare was perhaps lucky in his anonymity. The picture of Synge as a strong, silent individual, an objective artist who escaped fairly early from the uncertainties and introspections of lesser men, is replaced by one in which we see him suffering from prolonged green-sickness, groping his way uncertainly, discovering his *métier* more or less by accident—Yeats is fully vindicated there—and planning in his notebook an earlier version of *The Playboy,* to be called *The Murderer,* in which Christy, to his father's great pride, is elected a county councillor !

A number of aspects of Synge's life are distinctly interesting in the historical perspective of today. Whenever organized religion is firmly entrenched it needs to look out, for that is just the moment when certain human failings and contradictions seem most likely to manifest themselves in a variety of unedifying ways. I could bear testimony to the very real force of Christian values in a Protestant home in the early days of this century ; but at the same time I accept verbatim the picture given in this book of political prejudice and inconsistency and class feeling, which were to be found almost everywhere amongst the ascendant minority, and whereby a so-called good Christian could view a whole homeless family outside their roofless cottage with relative equanimity.

Synge, prompted perhaps a little by such recognitions, and still more by the force of nineteenth century materialism, which in those days appeared to many to hold all the cards, shed his Protestantism; just as that very great translator Stephen MacKenna shed his Catholicism. Their reasons for doing so seem a little dated today. Half-a-century of secular domination of thought is very far from being the complete vindication of their act. Both men had been in contact with religion during their most impressionable years; their great and noble achievement—for Plotinus to Christians must seem one of the most important of all non-Christian writers—can scarcely, for that reason, be regarded as a triumph for the good pagan. Synge, like many another man, shed his 'religion' for conscientious reasons, and not for private motives

of will ; but that he realized that the gently and slightly morbid pietism, mingled with snobbery, which he encountered in his home, was not the whole of religion is clear. The Protestants very largely ignored him—his own family never saw one of his plays ; the Catholics were shocked by his—by now—very mild freedom of speech. He apologized to their clergy in a passage for one of his prefaces that was subsequently withdrawn : " I do not think these country clergy, who have so much humour, and so much heroism when they face typhus or dangerous seas for the comfort of their people on the coasts of the west, will mind being laughed at for half an hour without malice, as the clergy in every Roman Catholic country were laughed at through the ages that had real religion.'

Religion, he realized, was not just fanatical denunciation in the Abbey Theatre, or gentle reproach over the breakfast table at home. It passed out of his life. But the discovery of the artist in himself, a discovery long delayed, seems almost the work of some invisible guardian angel. His emancipation came from without, and not from within, although the way for it had been well prepared by personal endeavour. He discovered the Homeric simplicity and eloquence of life in the west of Ireland, and having done this, he then took from the lips of the peasant—with perhaps a hint from Douglas Hyde, rather than Lady Gregory—all the vast possibilities of his imaginative idiom. To their naturally musical mode of speech he added his own ear as a poet.

For Synge is a poet, even though his lines are not broken up. Take poetic imagery and eloquence out of his plays and you have removed the most important part. The tide of his poetic eloquence is of course related to the modes of life which begot it ; just as Homer draws his strength from the Homeric world. Synge cut, revised, improved ; and laboured with all the intensity of a poet. But—despite modern suggestions to the contrary—the germ of all he said had come to him first in living speech. And, after a time, he could create similar speech himself, drawing on memory or his note-books for an incident, and clothing it in appropriate language. Jack Yeats remembered from their tour together flaming sods of turf soaked in parafin hurled heavenwards in Belmullet on St. John's Eve. On Christy Mahon's, that is to say on Synge's—lips, this became 'throwing sods against the visage of the stars.'

They had nurtured a poet, in many ways with gentleness and patience and care, if not with understanding ; but it is doubtful if his family ever realized it. Years ago my brother-in-law, when rector of Balbriggan, asked me to act as host, in his absence, to an elderly visiting clergyman. I was thrilled when I learnt that it was the Rev. Samuel Synge, the playwright's brother. But a week-end in his company disillusioned me. All he could tell me of interest was that he had once heard his mother suggest to ' Johnnie ' that he ought to try his hand at some more profitable form of writing, and that ' Johnnie ' had replied, ' No, I am just beginning to do what I want, and it is just beginning to be known '. The Rev. Samuel had taken this as an indication that Johnnie knew what he was about. Yeats was fighting his battles. George Moore had written in the *Irish Times* of *The Well of the Saints*— ' I would call attention to the abundance and the beauty of the dialogue : to the fact that one listens to it as one listens to music, charmed by the in-

evitableness of the words and the ease with which phrase is linked with phrase.'

But, to his mother, Grant Richards's rejection of his Aran Island notebook was more significant :—

> 'Poor Johnnie ! We could all have told him that, but then men like Yeats and the rest get round him and make him think Irish literature and the Celtic language, and all these things that they are trying to revive are very important, and, I am sorry to say, Johnnie seems to believe all they tell him. Now perhaps his eyes are beginning to be opened in that direction . . . .'

In this new biography we get the whole story ; the story of how Johnnie was right; the story of how his mother, at least from the literary angle, was completely wrong.

MONK GIBBON

RACE PREJUDICE

ARISTOTLE AND THE AMERICAN INDIANS : A STUDY IN RACE PREJUDICE IN THE MODERN WORLD. By Lewis Hanke. London : Hollis and Carter. 1959. x + 164 pp. 18s.

The American Indians had every reason to regret that Aristotle lived to compose his *Politics*. For the doctrine of natural slavery expounded in this treatise was avidly seized upon by many Spanish intellectuals anxious to justify the conquest and exploitation of the Indians. On the other hand, there were not wanting dissenters who sallied into the council-chambers, both in the colonies and in the homeland, to do battle for the Indian and, incidentally, refute the Philosopher.

This controversy in Spanish academic circles began in 1511, moved to a climax during the same century, sustained itself in the following hundred years and survived, though on an ever-decreasing scale of intensity, even into the nineteenth century. And the ghost of Aristotle, the apologist for slavery, has been at work in other lands. Such diverse ethnic groups as the Indians and Negroes of North America, the aborigines of the Pacific Islands, and the natives of South Africa, have also experienced the bitter consequences which flow from the invocation of an ideology designed to rationalize conquest and subsequent oppression. Thus, the Spanish debate 'epitomized the problem for generations of men ; it has today a larger significance than ever before' (p. 116). Such, in broad outline, is the theme of the author's book.

Hanke is at present Director of the Institute of Latin American Studies at the University of Texas and has already solidly established his reputation as a pioneer in a long neglected field, the ideological background of the Spanish conquests in America and the Philippines. His award-winning *The Spanish Struggle for Justice in the Conquest of America* (Philadelphia. 1949) will probably remain the standard English treatment for many years to come.

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As Hanke has pointed out at greater length in his 1949 study, the Spanish disputants considered two key-questions: (1) were the conquests lawful and (2) if so, how should the Indians be ruled? In trying to find the answers both warring factions drew heavily for inspiration upon theories formulated during the Middle Ages. The theory of the just war was one. Another was the extent of the papal temporal power. Yet another was the Scholastic interpretation of Aristotle's doctrine of natural slavery. Even so enlightened a thinker as St Thomas saw merit in the thesis that, in their own best interests, a barbaric people could be lawfully conquered by their cultural betters.

The focal point of Hanke's study is the Spanish argumentation on this latter theory and especially the clash between the fiery Dominican Las Casas and the urbane humanist, Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda. The former was bent on proving to the world that all Indians were affable, moral and superior even to the ancient Greeks and Romans. The humanist, on the other hand, found them to be scarcely distinguishable from monkeys and therefore needing to be taken in hand by the culturally superior Spaniards.

Charles V endeavoured to arbitrate this passage-at-arms by setting up a special committee which listened to the arguments of both contestants at Valladolid during 1550-51. As a token of his sincerity in this, the Emperor ordered the temporary suspension of all expeditions of conquest in America. Both disputants claimed the palm of victory. But, in fact, the committee never handed down a formal decision. Hanke's brief summary of this famous debate gives a fairly good idea of the intellectual calibre of Las Casas who is obviously the author's hero. Sepúlveda is the villain of the piece, and apologias penned by modern commentators on behalf of this traditionally maligned figure are briefly noted and rebutted.

However Hanke's account of the Valladolid debate as well as his sketch of similar views in subsequent centuries are less an original presentation than a highly condensed summary of the material in his 1949 book. As such this latest study bears traces of some deficiencies, the most noteworthy of which are the occasional *non sequitur*, attributable to excessive telescoping of the train of argument. Still in evidence is his tendency to rhapsodie unduly over Las Casas to the neglect of more 'realistic' thinkers such as Vitoria or Acosta. And the author leaves himself vulnerable when he wanders into the controversial field of alleged permanent inter-group differences. Inferences based, as in Allport's *The Nature of Prejudice* (New York 1954), upon quantified data (e. g. overlapping normal curves) are more convincing than statements like Hanke's which rest on no more solid empirical foundations than a highly laudable altruism.

Although not without great originality Hanke is at his best when outlining the thoughts of others. He does this in a refreshingly homespun manner enlivened by touches of impish humour. For example, 'The Zulus call all other tribes "animals" and themselves "The People." Sothos use derogatory terms to convey the idea that persons not born into their tribe are less than human . . . . From these examples we see that both Aristotle and Sepúlveda have something in common with the natives of Africa'. (p. 104)

Edward J. Brennan

THE ANCIENT WORLD

MORAL VALUES IN THE ANCIENT WORLD. By John Ferguson. London: Methuen. 1958. 256 pp. 22s. 6d.

This is a most useful synthetic scrutiny of the ethical values formulated in the Graeco-Roman civilization in which Christianity took root. The author, who is Professor of Classics at Ibadan, writes as a committed Christian. The particular question in his mind which shapes and orders his refractory material is this: what qualities are contained in Christian *agape* which are absent in the moral concepts of the noblest pagans, and which (humanly speaking) lent it superior strength?

After a survey of the moral standards of the Homeric age and of early Greek society (the treatment is perforce very brief; interested readers will find a longer exposé in Bowra's very good *The Greek Experience*), Ferguson examines at length Plato's formulation of the cardinal virtues, which later become more firmly schematized in Stoic thought before being incorporated into Christian ethics. Separate chapters are then devoted to the concepts of Friendship, Eros, Philanthropia, and Homonoia. There follows a long and well-written section on the philosophers' espousal of *autarcy*, the doctrine of self-sufficiency, which attended on the political disasters of the fourth-century *polis*. The author sees the fundamental weakness of Stoic, Epicurean, and Cynic expositions as lying in the absence of pity and compassion.

Native Roman ethical values are next considered, with good accounts of *virtus*, *pietas*, and *gravitas*. But the treatment here is rather cursory, and Roman traditional morality (which is 'admirable within narrow limits') does not get full justice. For example, there is no mention of *pudicitia*, the chastity in women which is the complement to manly *virtus*; and again, the concept of *frugalitas* and the condemnation of enervating luxury, which embraces the quaint Roman view of art as a corrupting influence, are ignored. But there is an excellent discussion of how certain qualities, notably *clementia*, *prudentia*, and *liberalitas*, were major motifs in the propaganda of the early Principate, as one can especially note from the coins.

Before considering Christian *agape*, Ferguson usefully devotes a chapter to the three key-concepts of Jewish ethical thought—*tsedeq* (righteousness), *chesed* (loving-kindness), and *ahabah* (love)—and delineates their influence in the ensuing Christian context. *Agape* is seen as transcending Greek moral values first by the absence of condescension, which is such a feature of *philanthropia* or *clementia* in their political application: secondly, by the universality of its scope irrespective of the character of the recipient, whereas the Greek view of friendship was narrowed by criteria of self-interest and affection: and finally, by its doctrine of *redemptive* suffering, which presented to Christians a meaning and a hope where Stoicism could counsel only blind courage.

This book, analytical by nature and based on scholarly *Wortstudien*, might have been tedious as well as useful. Not the least of Ferguson's merits is his constant attempt to lend liveliness and wit to a potentially daunting undertaking.

P. G. Walsh.

FROM THE GRACCHI TO NERO. A History of Rome from 133 B.C. to A.D. 68. By H. H. Scullard. London: Methuen. 1959. Pp. xi and 450. 25s.

This handsome little book begins with the political and social revolution inaugurated in 133 B.C. by the tribune Tiberius Gracchus, the angry young man of the post-Punic War generation of the Roman Republic, and ends with the palace revolution in A.D. 68 that closed the Julio-Claudian and ushered in the Flavian dynasty of the Roman Empire. It begins with a man striving to mend the faults in a system, and ends with a system too strong to be broken by the men who fought over its leadership. It covers the weightiest part of the period of Roman history generally taught in schools. It is therefore very welcome and extremely useful, not least because it is very much abreast of modern interpretations and conclusions. There are some 50 pages of notes at the end, where the results of some of the most recent researches into the various problems are summarized or references given to new books and periodical literature.

For the period it covers this book may well be used as an alternative or supplement to Cary's *History of Rome,* though the student will not find the going much easier. Cary is dull reading, and Scullard (alas !) is little better. (An immoderate use of the historian's ploy of the hypothetical future perfect tense is one of the most displeasing features of his style. One realizes by contrast, and sometimes by echos, what magnificent works Vols. IX and X of the *Cambridge Ancient History* really are). There are very profitable chapters on social and economic life and on literature, art, thought and religion at the end of the section on the Republic and again at the end of the section on the Principate.

Perhaps the chapters on the Republic are dull *sui generis*. Dr. Scullard presents them with a most conscientious attention to detail and desire to leave no fact unmentioned, although with a nice balance between political, social and military aspects, and a just emphasis (which one would expect from the author of *Roman Politics*) on the great influence wielded by the clique of aristocratic families. The tale plods on, telling of the endless and senseless struggle between Optimates and Populares, the bitter antagonism between Senators and Knights, and (as the century of revolution progressed) the growing influence of the army on politics. However the settlements of Augustus are interpreted, whether as the underhand schemes of a tyrant to dupe the people or as the benevolent gropings of an honest man for a constitutional settlement (and Scullard is on the latter side), they come as a welcome relief after a nightmare of intrigue and disorder. They did to many of their contemporaries : they do still to the reader of any history of Rome. There is no doubt that this book brightens up a little with the advent of the Principate ; and it is right that about one-fifth of it should be devoted to Augustus, the *princeps* who finally achieved that almost indefinable brand of autocracy which had eluded the *principes viri* before him, without mortally offending the basic principles of the Roman mind—the respect for law and tradition, the *mos maiorum*. For it was Augustus who, by trial and error rather than by design, built up a system for the maintenance of law and order which

could survive the follies and scandals of a Caligula or a Nero, even the horrors of the revolution with which this book concludes, until in the right hands and suitably modified it carried the Roman Empire into perhaps the most sensible and tranquil era the world has ever known.

All in all this is a book highly to be recommended, although for the more advanced rather than for beginners. Its chief fault is the amount of information that it contains in a confined space. But the information is good, and its purveyor reliable. Only an author deeply and obviously familiar with all things Roman can be forgiven for misquoting Horace (p. 195).

D. M. Nicol

GREEKS. By Michael Grant and Don Pottinger. Edinburgh: Nelson. 1958. pp. 63. 12s. 6d.

It is hard to decide whether this book is designed for children or simply for the long-suffering 'admass', conditioned to having its culture served up in thin slices sweetened with visual aids. At all events it belongs to the culture-at-a-glance school. Prof. Grant deals with the 'Greeks' chronologically under a number of headings (e.g. Dorian Invaders, Marathon, The Soul and the State). The headings are not badly chosen but there is only one page allotted to each, so that the information under any one heading has to be limited, controlled, or even expanded to the required 3-400 words. Additional remarks, afterthoughts, comments and quotations are spilled out in neat little glosses in both margins. (If all books were printed in this curious way readers would soon become cross-eyed). The whole book in fact is at the mercy of its format. One result is that the text, although competent and anxious to be up-to-date, reads like condensed lecture-notes, sometimes approaching the clipped jargon of *Time*. Such a method has its obvious limitations. One would not gather, for example, that Plato was anything but a narrow-minded political philosopher; or witness Thucydides, dragged in under the heading of 'The Peloponnesian War': 'Operations were often insignificant, but the war is eternally memorable because of the outstanding Athenian historian Thucydides, scientifically concerned with the laws of human nature in politics, who extracted permanently valuable political lessons from the decline and fall of the geographically small but exceptionally illuminating Athenian empire'. No concessions are made to the reader's rate of absorption; and for this reason it seems unlikely that this book (which would surely be very boring to most children) will do more than imitate the *Reader's Digest* by imparting to the minds of tired business-men some quickly-read and quickly-forgotten scraps of knowledge with which to impress their friends.

With all this the text is factual, prosaic and without a breath of humour. And this is odd when one looks at the illustrations of Mr Pottinger, which are presumably meant to be at least half the charm of the book, and are certainly meant to be funny. They litter the pages with well-planned abandon, and they are nearly all drawn in a slick, jazzed-up version of the Attic Red

Figure style, presenting the ' Greeks ' as ribald curiosities, tirelessly making fun of themselves for the benefit of our more advanced sense of humour. They are undeniably clever, but infuriatingly patronizing to the poor Greeks. The Greeks were undoubtedly a gay and lively people, but they had their solemn and serious moments. It may be madly witty to illustrate a line or two on Sappho with a raving rock-and-roll vocalist-*cum*-lyre, or the ideas of *hubris* and *nemesis* with a picture of Humpty-Dumpty *à la grecque,* but it does little to help our understanding of the Greeks, and one feels that the Greeks themselves would not have been amused. It is a fallacy that children prefer to look at animals dressed up in human clothes performing human functions rather than animals plain ; and there is much to be said for letting Greek artists portray themselves in their own way.

The Byzantine Greeks are (as usual) permitted the minimum of space under cover of their contributions to the Renaissance.

D. M. Nicol

THE GENERALSHIP OF ALEXANDER THE GREAT. By Major-General J. F. C. Fuller. Eyre and Spottiswoode. 1958. 35s.

Perhaps it would be absurd, as Dr Coulton facetiously suggested, to leave the writing of botany to the plants ; but there is much to be said for letting the generals have their say about the art of war and the men who made it an art. Not that Alexander was all general. He was a man of many parts. He was in fact a genius, or, as Gen. Fuller would have it, in the grip of a genius, for he conceives of genius as a *numen* rather than a quality. Alexander had well learnt the lesson taught him by his father Philip ' that in war military force is not the sole weapon in the armoury of a general or even the most puissant.'

The first part of this book is a detailed account of the historical background and the career of the great man, owing much (as indeed it must) to Arrian and to Sir William Tarn—an account nearly as matter-of-fact as the first and not nearly as urbane as the second. The section of greatest interest and use to scholars is in the middle where the great battles, the sieges and the small wars of Alexander are fought over again with a soldier's love of the finer points of strategy and a discussion of all the topographical and other problems. This is admirable. There follow two chapters on the statesmanship and on the generalship of Alexander. Tarn describes Alexander as ' one of the supreme fertilizing forces of history', in much the same way that Prof. Norman Baynes describes Constantine as ' that erratic block in the course of human history which diverted the stream'. The former came to his throne in 336 B.C., the latter died in 337 A.D. ; and nothing in the world was ever again quite the same after either of them. But whereas Constantine left a strong and consolidated Empire infused with a new spirit, Alexander left only the dream of

an Empire which had been inspired by his personality and created by his generalship, but which proved unable to survive his death. A latter-day Plutarch, summarizing his parallel lives of the two, might say that Fortune was to blame for striking Alexander down at the age of thirty-two before he had had time to impart substance to his dream. Gen. Fuller does not dwell on the causes of the immediate dissolution of Alexander's Empire after his death : it would really have been beyond the scope of his book. But it is a fact which seems to indicate that, for all his magnificent ideal of a fusion between the Macedonian and Persian peoples, his qualities as a general were greater than his qualities as a statesman.

The Epilogue on ' The Value of History ' sits rather oddly on the end of an otherwise sober and factual book. It is Gen. Fuller's belief that if the British statesmen of the second world war had been better versed in the study of Alexander's ' psychological warfare ' they would have saved their people a lot of trouble and perhaps saved Eastern Europe from the maw of Stalin. But it is at least debatable whether the squabbling city-states of ancient Greece can be compared to the more complex nations of modern Europe ; and in any case it is well known that whatever generals may learn from studying carefully-drawn maps of the campaigns of their predecessors (and there are some splendid examples in this book) statesmen as a race learn hardly anything from the lessons of history. If they did it would no longer be possible, as Gen. Fuller observes, to fall back on the always comforting reflection that ' history repeats itself '.

D. M. Nicol

THE CHURCH IN IRELAND

LE DROIT ECCLÉSIASTIQUE CONTEMPORAIN D'IRLANDE. By Jean Blanchard. Paris : Pichon & Durand-Auzias. 1958. Pp. 170

This book is a thesis, done at the suggestion of Professor Gabriel Le Bras, for which M. Jean Blanchard of the French Embassy in Dublin was awarded the degree of *Docteur en Droit* by the Paris Faculty of Law. It is essentially a factual book ; as Professor Le Bras remarks in his Preface, ' Le premier mèrite de M. Blanchard est de nous instruire '. Its aim is to present a complete picture of the present-day Irish Church : of its organization, personnel, revenues and place in the life of the country. Interesting comments and comparisons are frequently made ; but the author's main object is always to set out the facts. And unlike some other foreigners who have written about Ireland, M. Blanchard went to considerable trouble to get the facts right, as can be seen by his acknowledgements at the beginning and by his footnotes and bibliography.

The book begins with a brief sketch of the history of the Church in Ireland, from the earliest times down to the National Synod of Thurles in 1850, with

which, as the author says, " la période contemporaine de l'histoire ecclésiastique irlandaise " begins. The present-day Church is then studied under five headings : ' La Geographie Ecclesiastique ', ' La Hierarchie ', ' Le Temporel ', ' Les Rapports entre l'Eglise et l'Etat ' and ' La Condition du Clergé et des Religieux '. Under ' La Geographie ' there is a full account of the present territorial divisions of the Irish Church—provinces, dioceses, parishes—and of their historical origins, with various statistical tables. A good map of the Irish dioceses is provided at the end of the book to help the reader with this chapter. For the second chapter perhaps ' Le Personnel ' would be a better title than ' La Hierarchie ' ; it deals with all those who carry on the work of the Church : bishops and diocesan officials, the parish clergy, religious ; and it has a final section on seminaries and ' le recrutement sacerdotal '. The chapter on ' Le Temporel ' deals with the Irish Church's revenues and the methods used to hold Church property (trustees, etc.) ; it includes a section on charitable bequests in Irish law. The fourth chapter, on relations between Church and State, is perhaps the most interesting in the whole work. The relations between Civil Law and Canon Law are examined in some detail, from ' l'affaire O'Keeffe ' in the 1870's up to the present day, and there is a very useful section on the difficult question of marriage law in this connection. Article 44 of the Irish Constitution is also discussed. M. Blanchard is aware that there is ' un mouvement minoritaire mais bruyant ' which would like to see a more official recognition given to the Catholic Church in Ireland. But this movement, he says, ' ne semble pas avoir rencontré une large audience et ne paraît pas avoir d'avenir '. He thinks highly of the existing arrangement, which works very well in practice : ' Ce régime de relation est peut-être celui du monde qui fonctionne le mieux '. The final chapter surveys the way of life, the duties and the general social role in the country of both secular clergy and religious.

Taken all in all, M. Blanchard's book is a most useful one. To interested people in other countries it will give an objective and balanced account of the Catholic Church in Ireland ; and for Irishmen at home, both clergy and laity, it will provide a vast amount of information and statistics not easily available elsewhere. It is well arranged and indexed, and the clear and orderly presentation of the matter makes it suitable for the general reader as well as for the specialist.

P. C. Barry.

STUDIES IN HOLINESS

THE LIFE OF SAINT THOMAS AQUINAS—BIOGRAPHICAL DOCUMENTS. Translated and edited with an Introduction by Kenelm Foster, O.P. London ; Longmans. 1959. xii + 172 pp. 30s.

The thirteenth and early fourteenth century documents bearing directly upon the life of St Thomas Aquinas are, considering the distinction of the subject, surprisingly few. There are the three earliest biographies of the saint, written by William of Tocco, Bernard of Gui and Peter Calo ; some chapters in Tolomeo of Lucca's *Historia Ecclesiastica ;* scattered episodes in the *Vitae*

Fratrum and the *Cronica Brevis* of Gerard de Frachet ; and, of course, the evidence of the first canonization-enquiry of 1319. The biographies present something of a ' synoptic problem ' ; but nowadays there is general agreement of scholars that both Gui and Calo depend upon Tocco, perhaps upon an earlier draft of Tocco's *Life* than we now possess. Tocco was an indefatigable postulator of the Cause of St Thomas's canonization—his first draft of the *Life* would seem to be of the nature of a memorandum for use in the campaign—but he was no stylist. Gui on the other hand was a practised author (his works include a well-known *Inquisitor's Manual*) and even something of a trained historian. Where they agree, he uses fewer words to describe more vividly what the rhetorical Tocco labours. So Fr Foster justifies his choice of Bernard of Gui's *Life*, which he here translates, together with the greater part of the other documents mentioned.

The labour might at first sight appear superfluous. Those who are interested in the life of St Thomas in a scholarly way will want to consult the sources —all of them, not merely a selection—in the original Latin. But Fr Foster is not directly concerned with the scholars, although he caters most admirably for them in his Introduction and annotations. He finds that for many ' St Thomas Aquinas is, by and large, an authority rather than a saint, a sort of embodiment of theology or doctrinal orthodoxy rather than a lover of Christ ' and, not concerned with doctrine except incidentally, he wants ' to confront the reader as directly as possible with the personality of St Thomas ' (p. 1). In his works St Thomas is starkly impersonal; he never seems to permit himself an aside on himself or his surroundings. But the contemporary documents, stressing holiness rather than theological eminence, present a picture that has a charm and a freshness, even a naïveté, of its own ; and the easy grace of Fr Foster's translations preserves the charm.

The familiar incidents are here ; family opposition to Thomas's becoming a Friar Preacher, his imprisonment at Roccasecca, his escape, probably with the connivance of his sisters, by means of a rope let down from the tower (there is no mention of a basket so that Chesterton's remark about its having to be a rather big basket is, perhaps, no more than a pleasing conceit !) ; Albert the Great's observation at Cologne that ' We call this lad a dumb ox, but I tell you that the whole world is going to hear his bellowing ' ; his being sent, apparently after some hesitation on the part of the Master-General concerning his suitability, to Paris for higher studies ; his amazingly fruitful two decades of teaching in Paris and in Italy ; his death at Fossanova when on the journey to the Council of Lyons, to which he had been summoned by Pope Gregory X. There are more homely features too ; his daily Mass at an early hour, followed by assistance at another Mass ; his frequent absent-mindedness (or contemplation), even, it will be recalled, as the guest of St Louis of France when he showed that his mind was miles away by suddenly thumping the table with ' That settles the Manichees !.' There is his popularity as a preacher which may not have been unconnected with his preference for short sermons ' because if they are good they are heard more eagerly, and if they are bad the boredom does not last long ' ; there is his humility as seen in the delightful incident of the ' undistinguished friar ' of Bologna who had the Prior's permission to take the first member of the

community he met and pressed St Thomas, not knowing who he was, into accompanying him to the city on some errand ; or his humanity as seen in his going with some of his Paris students on an outing to St Denis.

The notes, which, despite Fr Foster's modest disclaimers, make this book a valuable monograph, complete our instruction. Some curious *lacunae* in the evidence are underlined. Did St Thomas spend a period as a student at Paris before going to Cologne to sit at the feet of Albert the Great ? When and where was he ordained priest ? What was the nature of his final illness ? Was it a form of malaria, as the vicinity of the Pontine marshes and Fossonova might suggest ? Or was even his large and sturdy frame worn out by the prodigious activity, physical as well as intellectual, of thirty years of travelling and teaching ? The inscription in the room in which he died puts it quaintly, if one recalls rightly, as ' a stomach disorder brought on by excessive study ' ; but this has no special authority. Finally, what became of the body of St Thomas, claimed by the Cistercians of Fossanova and by the Dominicans and several times exhumed and reinterred before it finally reached Toulouse almost a century after his death ? On these and many other matters Fr Foster is enlightening. One is especially grateful for a detailed note (Appendix I) on St Thomas's family.

But the abiding impression left by the book is of St Thomas as a personality, a composite picture built up of formal biography, the testimony of witnesses at the canonization-enquiry, details from the histories of Tolomeo and Gerard de Frachet, and, not least, the amplifications in the notes. The clearest picture is of St Thomas, not at Paris the scene of his greatest academic triumphs, but travelling on foot in that area between Naples and Rome that he knew and loved so well. The old Via Appia along which he trudged with the faithful Reginald divides a landscape that cannot have greatly changed since his day. The unlikely Gothic of Fossanova is still striking in that land of another architectural style ; the surrounding towns and places, Frosinone, Priverno, Maenza and, further off, Montecassino, Aquino itself Roccasecca and, to the south, Naples where a ' shattering experience ' during Mass determined him to suspend work on the unfinished *Summa*, what he had already written appearing as straw in comparison with what was now revealed to him, an experience that ushered in the last period in his life. That part of the world is tenacious of tradition. One recalls a visit to Fondi some years ago to see a room where St Thomas is reputed to have lectured. The building is now a hospital and a stout Italian nun called for *la chiave di san Tommaso* as if he were a convalescent who had gone for a stroll leaving his key with the portress !

Fr Foster ends his book with a translation of the letter of the Paris Arts Faculty (not, he notes, the theologians among whom St Thomas had twice been numbered as a professor) to the Dominican Chapter at Lyons in 1274. ' Nothing less than the voice of Jeremiah', says the letter, ' would be adequate now . . . that the venerated Master, brother Thomas of Aquino, has been called forever out of this world.' The eulogy is the climax of this book which, in the writing has, clearly, been a labour of love ; and the product is something rarer, a labour of love that is also a work of impeccable scholarship.

M. B. Crowe

THE LIFE OF ST JOHN OF THE CROSS. By Crisógono de Jesús. London. Longmans. 1958. 45s.

His qualities as mystical writer and ascetic have tended to obscure the humanity of St John of the Cross. The uncompromising attitude of the author of the *Ascent of Mount Carmel*—' In order to arrive at having pleasure in everything, desire to have pleasure in nothing '—tends to repel unless one sees how the saint applied the maxim in his own life. Father Crisógono, in his critical biography, shows that John's harshness to himself was not incompatible with tolerance and tenderness for others. The saint who asked : ' Who has ever seen the virtues and things of God being taught with blows and harshness ? ' valued penance as a means not an end. The author presents a man devoted to his family, a Spiritual Director scrupulously attentive to the needs of souls, a guide who wrote maxims to suit individual requirements and composed the strophes and commentary of his sublime *The Living Flame of Love* for a friend. He shows us St Teresa's ' little Seneca ' insisting on moderation in the training of novices, speaking strongly on the stifling effect of the multiplication of rules, and John the Definitor fearless in the suppression of abuses, uncompromisingly dedicated to the contemplative aspect of the Reform Life. We glimpse John the Prior telling amusing stories at recreation, inspiring his friars to contemplate the beauty of God revealed in Nature, using a country walk as a cure for melancholy, celebrating feasts with a good dinner.

In his full biography, Father Crisógono has revealed a wealth of hitherto unpublished information. The work suffers from an over-abundance of detail, of names of places and persons and of edifying anecdotes which are trivial by comparison with the sublimity of the saint. The writings of St John are covered in one short chapter. We welcome this translation by Kathleen Pond, an abridgement of the original, but with detailed references.

The particular merit of the work is the vividness with which Father Crisógono recreates the background and times of the saint. Basing his account on contemporary documents he shows how the mystic was formed through poverty and study, opposition from his brethren, imprisonment, exercise of authority, and finally rejection. He describes in detail the formative years : John's unsuccessful apprenticeship in turn to a carpenter, a tailor, a woodcarver, a painter, while a boarder in the Catechism School of Medina ; his devotion to the sick he nursed while messenger at the Plague Hospital and his notorious application and austerity while attending the Jesuit school. Father Crisógono emphasizes the excellence of the training in this school and the importance of the four years John spent there learning Greek, Rhetoric, possibly Philosophy, and where he first met the Latin and Spanish classics.

His course completed, John became a Carmelite and passed to Salamanca University at a time when the professors included Luís de León and Guevara and ' all systems were discussed, all opinions could be held. There were no limits beyond that of the faith.' Father Crisógono finds that ' the essential freedom of judgment and the terse scholastic style were to influence John when he later came to construct his system of mysticism.'

In the autumn of 1567, John providentially met St Teresa. The vigorous Foundress wrote of the ardent Carmelite about to seek perfection among the

Carthusians. She attracted him instead to the Reform. Father Crisógono picks his way delicately through the intricacies of the Reform. Using new material he presents impartially the rights and wrongs of the strife between Calced and Discalced, emphasizing the strong support of Philip II for Reform, encouraged by the motherly solicitude of St Teresa. He examines the crystallizing of differences at the General Chapter at Piacenza, the reasons for the convening of the Chapter of the Discalced at Almodóvar, and the subsequent excommunication of John and his associates. He gives an excellent account of the nine months' imprisonment of John in the monastery at Toledo, his sufferings, physical and mental, patiently accepted ; his lyric writings ; his carefully planned escape. The author conveys the excitement aroused by the Brief of Separation and the triumph of its execution in Alcalá in 1581. The function by the King's order, was carried out with the greatest possible splendour and all the expenses—about one hundred thousand maravedís—were paid out of the Royal Purse.

When his Reform was firmly established, the Father was cast out in disgrace, as he had foretold ' thrown into a corner like an old rag.' His offer to go to Mexico if sent was accepted by the Chapter in Madrid. The closing months of John's life were clouded by the defamatory process of Diego Evangelista whose avowed intention was to dismiss him from the Order. On 14 December, 1591, John of the Cross gently took leave of his brethren : ' To-night I have to go and say Matins in heaven.'

ELIZABETH P. CROWE

ST PAUL. By Claude Tresmontant. London : Longmans. 1958. 6s. Pp. 190.
ST AUGUSTINE. By Henri Marrou. London : Longmans. 1958. 6s. Pp. 190.
MASTER ECKHARDT. By Jeanne Angelet-Hustagne. London : Longmans. 1958. 6s. Pp. 190.
BUDDHA AND BUDDHISM. By Maurice Percheron. London : Longmans. 1958. 6s. Pp. 191.
SAINTS AND OURSELVES. Third Series. Edited by Philip Caraman, S.J. London : Hollis & Carter. 1958. Pp. 140. 15s.

IN ANSWER to the popular demand for what our forebears pompously called ' all the best that has been thought and said,' the French publishing firm, Editions du Seuil, brought out a series of paper-backs entitled : ' Men of Wisdom'. They have been translated into English and printed, ' lavishly illustrated', between bright, glossy covers. The serious reader might be pardoned for ignoring them and the suspicious reader for sensing something tendentious in the choice and juxtaposition of St Paul, St Augustine, Master Eckhardt and Buddha. But they would be wrong. The authors are scholars who have published important works on their subject ; none of them has an axe to grind ; nor have they been compelled by their editor to work to a fixed pattern or policy.

In his treatment of St Paul, Claude Tresmontant closely relates doctrine to life. As he rightly remarks, St Paul's doctrine was not ' thought up ' ; the mystery of Christ was revealed to, in and through him. All the major

Pauline themes are expounded briefly but adequately (though there are echoes of Fr Teilard de Chardin in places).

Henri Marrou, on the other hand, allows St Augustine to speak for himself. He is content to demonstrate, in the words of Blondel, the 'ever-renewed fecundity of Augustinian thought'. His survey of St Augustine's influence should teach his reader 'to appeal unceasingly from "Augustinianism" in all its manifestations to St. Augustine himself'.

Master Eckhardt may seem out of place in such company, but, in fact, this is a study of the important medieval school of German mysticism of which Eckhardt was the most prominent member. Eckhardt is not easy to interpret and perhaps for this very reason his works are becoming increasingly popular. Those who feel they *must* read him will find this a sane and sympathetic introduction.

'Buddhism is a democratic religion,' says His Highness Maung Ji, 'and one day will perhaps be the world religion.' It is hard to see in what sense Buddhism can be called a religion at all, but this is the sort of half truth that is rapidly gaining acceptance. Buddhism as a way of life has, it is true, some resemblance to Christian asceticism, and as such is not without its interest. Maurice Percheron's account of it in its various forms is clear and comparatively uncomplicated and readable; we are not likely to find better,

Three things about this series particularly recommend it. The translations are excellent, in particular the translations of the texts : by Knox, Edmund Hill (Augustine) and Hilda Graef (Eckhardt)—the last two from the original. The bibliographies are well-prepared (that for St Augustine bv Prof. J. O'Meara). The illustrations, chosen with taste and imagination from little-known sources, create an atmosphere which disposes us to accept the man as a living person and savour the quality of his work.

Anyone who has not made the acquaintance of *Saints and Ourselves* must lead a very sheltered life. Two series have already appeared ; and now a third. As before, each of the twelve authors hase chosen a saint who appeals to him or to her. The result is diversity, not only in holiness, but also in hagiography. A scholar like Gerard Murphy will obviously treat his subject (St Malachy) differently from Muriel Spark, writing on St Monica. It does not come as a surprise to us that Walter Starkie should choose to write on St James, or A.F.C. Beales on St Joseph Calasanctius. This sort of diversity is refreshing ; as also is the modern approach, the presentation of the saints as human beings set in a definite place in history. But after all, hagiography is not quite the same as secular biography, and while the older writers may have committed atrocities in the name of edification, it remains true that the real significance of the saints lies, not in their idiosyncrasies or their magnificant human qualities, but in the grace of God shining through them and transcending the merely human. This point has been well made by Sir Arnold Lunn in his life of St Francis Borgia. It is for this reason that, in the end, the most satisfying lives are by the professional biographers of saints, by Fr Brodrick, Alice Curtayne, Hugh Ross Williamson. That edification can be combined with human interest is nowhere better illustrated than in Fr Brodrick's life of St Bernadette, which closes this series. It is surely one of the loveliest things he has ever written.

CYRIL BARRETT

ST METHODIUS. The Symposium : a Treatise on Chastity. Translated and annotated by Herbert Musurillo, S.J. Ancient Christian Writers, vol. XXVII. Westminster, Maryland, Newman Press; Longmans. 1958. 21s.

ST ODO OF CLUNY. (Makers of Christendom) Translated and edited by Dom Gerard Sitwell, O.S.B. Sheed and Ward. 1958. 16s.

St Methodius is the author of several Greek treatises which must certainly be dated before the end of the era of active persecution of the Church. He died as a martyr, at some date in the third century. Beyond that, very little indeed is known of his personal life ; and the textual transmission of his writings is also most confused. Father Musurillo writes as an expert in these problems, and has some interesting things to say of this early ascetic who quotes Plato more frequently than any other Christian writer, and whose view of matter and the flesh is more neo-Platonic than Christian. The doctrine expounded in the *Symposium* is startling in its extreme asceticism. All men are called to a life of chastity. Marriage is only permitted as a concession to the weakness of the flesh, and by way of dispensation. Yet these extreme doctrines are set forth in language that makes an appeal to the reader, and there seems to be no doubt that the teaching of Methodius has had its share in the development of the ascetic traditions of the Byzantine and Russian Churches. If marriage is treated as a concession to human weakness, there is none the less a brilliant development of the whole concept of the Church as Bride and Virgin Mother.

St Odo of Cluny, second and greatest of the abbots of Cluny, is little more than a name to most readers, who have learned from their text-books something of the great part played by the abbots of Cluny in the reform of the Church in the tenth and eleventh centuries. All the more welcome is this volume in which Dom Gerard Sitwell gives us an English translation of two *Lives :* one a *Life of St Odo* by his contemporary and disciple, John of Salerno ; the other a *Life of St Gerard of Aurillac,* written by St Odo himself, and revealing a source from which St Odo got his high ideal of the monastic life at a time when so many monasteries were in sore need of reform.

AUBREY GWYNN

LIVING LANGUAGES IN CATHOLIC WORSHIP : AN HISTORICAL ENQUIRY. By Cyril Korolevsky. Translated by Donald Attwater. London : Longmans, Green & Co. Ltd., 1957. ix + 195 pp. 15s.

THE use of the vernacular in the liturgy is a much discussed question in the Western or Latin Church in recent times. Pope Pius XII in the encyclical *Mediator Dei* left the way open when he stated that ' the adoption of the vernacular in quite a number of functions may prove of great benefit to the faithful ; but to make such concessions is for the Holy See alone '. The Holy See has, in actual fact, made quite a number of concessions, notably in the matter of bilingual Rituals, permitting the use of the vernacular in the administration of some of the sacraments and sacramentals. Fr Korolevsky, a priest of the Byzantine rite who is working in Rome and is a consultor of the Congregation for the Eastern Church, wrote this book, he says, ' to

provide some exact documentation, complete as far as possible, for those seeking to obtain the introduction of a measure of living languages into the public worship of the Western Church '.

As the title indicates, it is an historical study of the use of the vernacular in the liturgy, both in the East and in the West. Part I deals with the East, where from the earliest times the various national languages were used in the liturgy, a practice which was simply accepted by the Holy See and not interfered with. Part II deals with the use of the vernacular in the Western Church, from the approval of Slavonic in the ninth century up to the granting of bilingual Rituals to France, Germany, U.S.A., Canada, Australia and other countries in recent years. A number of interesting and little known facts are brought to light in this part of the book. We learn, for instance, that John of Monte Corvino, the fourteenth century Franciscan missionary, when working among the Mongols of southern Siberia, celebrated Mass according to the Roman rite in the local language, Uigur Turkish (apparently on his own initiative, without recourse to Rome). Especially worthy of note is the fact that in 1615 the Holy Office, in the name of Pope Paul V, granted permission to Chinese priests to celebrate Mass in Chinese. A translation of the Roman Missal was printed in Peking in 1670 (the delay was due to persecutions) and was put into actual use : as we know from a decree of the Congregation of Propaganda in 1755 prohibiting it ! This second part also deals briefly with the rulings of the Council of Trent on liturgical languages and points out that Trent did not condemn on principle the use of living languages in public worship ; ' what it did do was to forbid such use on the ground that it was inopportune at that time.' There is a third part dealing with the translation of Latin liturgical texts into other dead languages : into Syriac in Malabar and into Ge'ez in Ethiopia ; but this part, we fear, will be of less interest to the ordinary reader.

Fr Korolevsky, by means of the historical facts which he assembles, shows that the use of the vernacular in the liturgy is not anything new or revolutionary ; that on the contrary, it is as old as the Church itself. He confines himself to stating the facts and does little pleading ; but it is quite clear that he is very much in favour of a greater use of the vernacular in the Roman rite. His book is intended for the average intelligent reader who is not a specialist in ecclesiastical history or comparative liturgy—though it does presuppose a certain minimum acquaintance with history and geography, and a few specially drawn maps would have helped a good deal with regard to the latter. The translation is competently done by Mr Donald Attwater and reads well. The section dealing with bilingual Rituals was partly re-written and brought up to date by him ; and many footnotes have been added by him also. It seems a pity that the footnotes were put at the end of the book and not at the foot of the pages, especially as many of them are not merely references but contain additional and often quite interesting information. And wouldn't ' the Congregation of Propaganda ', as it is ordinarily called even in English, do instead of the rather cumbersome title ' the Congregation for the Spreading of the Faith ' ? These, however, are small faults in a well produced and very interesting book.

P. C. Barry.

ANGLICAN LITURGIES OF THE SEVENTEENTH AND EIGHTEENTH CENTURIES. By W. Jardine Grisbrooke. Alcuin Club Collections No. XL. London : S.P.C.K. 1958. xvi + 390 pp. 42s.

Nowadays, when liturgical reform is so much in the air in the Catholic Church, it is interesting to see that Anglicans too feel the need for reform in their liturgical services. In his Preface to this book the author tells us that it is commonly acknowledged that the Church of England is afflicted by what is called ' liturgical chaos ' and that the most zealous defenders of the Book of Common Prayer are forced to admit that, as it stands, ' it no longer suffices to serve the needs of the worshipping community.' Nor is this dissatisfaction anything very new. The Prayer Book Communion Service in particular has been ' criticized and condemned in generation after generation.' In the past some have tried to revise it and many others have used it unaltered ' but with many grumblings.' The root of the difficulty seems to be that the Communion Service, as originally composed, was based on a doctrine of the Eucharist that has long since ceased to be the doctrine of the Church of England. The reformed liturgy emerged from the upheavals of the sixteenth century bearing the strong impress of one man, Thomas Cranmer, and naturally its Communion Service enshrined his Eucharistic doctrine. But when Elizabeth I's Convocations later drew up the Thirty-nine Articles, they departed from Cranmer's teaching on many points and notably regarding the Lord's Supper. Notwithstanding this, they retained his Communion Service and the result was that Anglican liturgy was not consistent with Anglican doctrine. In the present work Mr Grisbrooke examines various attempts made in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries to revise this Anglican Communion Service. In the second part of his book (pp. 163—384) he gives the texts of eleven ' liturgies ' (Communion Services) composed during this period, e.g. the Scottish Liturgies of 1637 and 1764 the Liturgy of Jeremy Taylor, etc. ; and in the first part he provides a commentary on each of these. The whole is a work of detailed and scholarly research which will be of considerable interest to all students of the history of Anglican liturgy.

P. C. BARRY